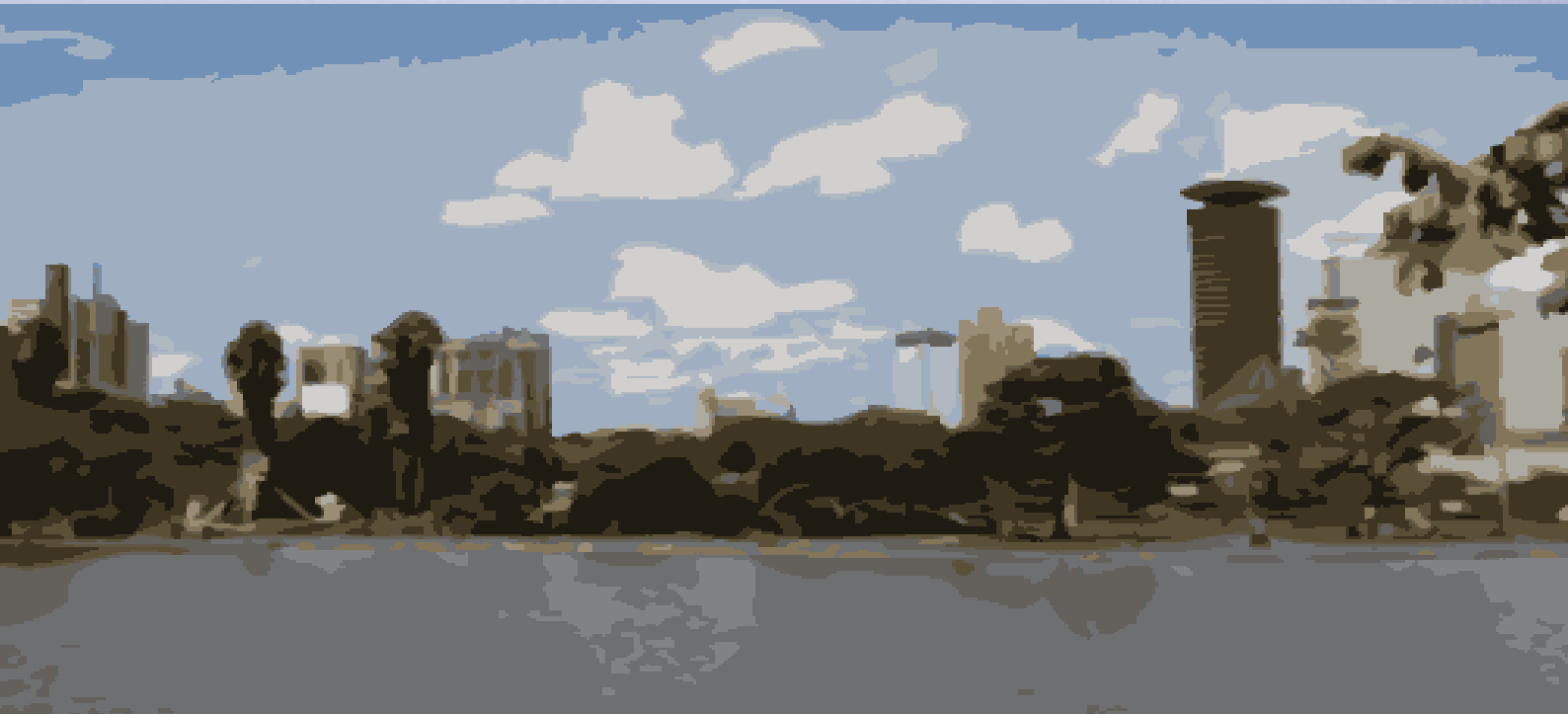


# Caritas Europa at the WSF 2007



Report of the workshop  
on the interdependence of  
migration and development

 **Caritas** EUROPA

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# INTRODUCTION



Caritas Europa, represented by Marius Wanders, Secretary General, Aude Hadley, International Development and Peace Officer and Peter Verhaeghe, Migration Office participated at the World Social Forum (WSF) 2007 by holding a workshop on the link between migration and development, entitled:

“Reducing Vulnerability, Promoting Opportunities: North-South Cooperation to Improve Coherence Between Migration and Development Policies”.

The workshop explored the interdependence between migration and development practices and policies, from the perspective of as well countries or origin, transit and destination. It aimed to further explore the issue of the interdependence between migration and development. A crucial issue today, that is high on the agenda of Caritas Europa and on which Caritas as a global player contributes both from the practical as from the advocacy side.

This Caritas Europa workshop took place on the 21 January 2007 and is the result of a partnership between Caritas Europa and its member organisations Secours Catholique-Caritas France, Caritas Spain, Caritas Albania, and Caritas Italy; as well as Caritas Morocco and Caritas Lebanon

**Brussels, 16 April 2007**



Aude Hadley  
International Development and Peace Officer



Peter Verhaeghe  
Migration Officer



## The Diaspora to the African Development

First speaker **Laurent Kapela**, from **Secours Catholique – Caritas France**, spoke about the contribution of the Diaspora to the African development. He insisted on the following points:

Remittances represent an important opportunity for African countries. It is well known that in some developing countries the financial transfers by migrant workers are higher than ODA. Sometimes, governments tend to rely on remittances to compensate their own lack of initiatives. However, political commitment of governments is needed if sustainable development is to happen. We must pay attention not to put our hopes of development only on the diaspora. Only relying on remittances is not a long-term solution. Partnerships have to be developed between the diaspora, countries of destination and countries of origin, thereby institutionally fostering a broader impact of remittances on development.

Nevertheless, if remittances can contribute to the development of African countries, movements of funds should be accompanied and facilitated by policy measures in order to make them more effective, while movements of people should be facilitated through more liberal visa policies allowing people to travel back and forth between country of destination and of origin more easily.

### Key step to be achieved:

- Involvement of all relevant stakeholders (country of origin, welcoming country, members of the Diaspora grouped in associations) in a dynamic partnership leading to more and better development.
- Promotion of a global perspective, leading to development through a multidimensional approach (infrastructures, education, health...), and involving members of the Diaspora in public decision-making processes. For instance in Mali there is an economical and social council where the Malian of abroad are represented. Such a structure allows giving more importance to the Diaspora, linking its components between them and the local population.
- Countries of origin should empower civil society actors to participate more actively in development processes.
- Policy measures should encourage the use of remittances flows in a rationalised way in order to fulfil their positive potential and maximise their impact. Low-cost bank transfers and development of associations which would benefit from administrative facilitation for their activities are especially important in this regard.
- Exploitation and discrimination of migrants in receiving countries remain very important, even in countries that have ratified International Human Rights instruments. The only way to go beyond such problems depends on consistent policies and cooperation practices.

**Laurent Kapela**





## Euro-African NGO conference of Rabat

The floor was then given to **Hicham Rachidi**, partner of **Caritas Morocco**; in charge of the preparation of the July 2006 Euro-African NGO conference of Rabat.

Mr. Rachidi explained that knowing that governments were going to meet in July 2006 to discuss migration and development, civil society organised a shadow event two weeks before the meeting.

Nearly 200 participants representing organisations from 20 African and European countries as well as observers from the Moroccan government, UNHCR and the EU met in Rabat from 30 June to 1 July 2006 in the framework of the civil society event called Euro-African NGO Conference on Migration, Fundamental Rights and Freedom of Movement.

The conference observed that policy choices made by governments in the South under pressure of governments in the North and of international financial and commercial institutions have not brought the promised prosperity and do jeopardize seriously the development of Africa.

The conference denounced the expanding “war on migrants” in the Mediterranean and along the African Atlantic coast line. It was reiterated that freedom of movement is a fundamental right which is threatened by a plethora of measures such as visa regulations, readmission agreements, border control operations etc.

The conference insisted on the ne-

cessity for all countries to sign and ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and urged for a denunciation of the Economic Partnership Agreements and for cancelling public debts of the poorest countries, as powerful measures allowing Africa to successfully combat underdevelopment.

The organisation of the EU-Africa governmental conference on Migration and Development in Rabat on 10-11 July 2006 was a direct consequence of the tragic events in Ceuta and Melilla (end 2005).

European and African governments reached an agreement on measures to combat root causes of migration and poverty and for development.

The Final Declaration confirms the will to combat root causes, but also the will to “facilitate the circulation of workers and persons”. The Action Plan is more concrete but leaves many doubts and questions:

- Co-development is defined as “action promoting contribution of migrants to the development of their country of origin”. Our main concern is that governments try to make migrants carry the main effort for the development of their countries.
- Towards a temporary migration: the second part of the Action Plan aims to put into place mechanisms to organise a better management of mobility of competences according to the needs on labour markets.
- Reinforce police cooperation: the third part concerns police cooperation and is in fact the heart

**Hicham Rachidi**

Caritas Morocco

of the Action Plan. It is built upon the “need for effective systems for readmission between all countries concerned”.

Certain proposals in the Final Declaration are cause of concern for civil society. The Declaration doesn’t mention the International human rights instruments (UDHR, Migrant Workers’ Convention, etc.)

On the contrary, there is an overstressed priority for the “fight against illegal immigration” through in particular the acceptance of the principle of readmission.

Though there is a certain commitment to combat root causes of forced migration, an assessment of the current economic partnership agreements has never been made.

As a consequence, the proposals remain very general: “promoting good governance”, “human and commercial exchange”, “promotion of peace and stability”: no concrete commitment however regarding the question of public debt or on increasing ODA.



## Labour migration movements

Third speaker **Najla Chahda**, director of the Migrants' Centre of **Caritas Lebanon**, focused her intervention on the challenges related to labour migration movements in the Mediterranean and Middle East, such as feminisation, brain drain and discrimination of migrant workers. She insisted on the following points:

An increasingly common characteristic of labour migration is feminisation. According to the Ministry of Labour, there are more than 140,000 Asian and African migrant workers in Lebanon, of which 75% are women household workers.

Unemployment and household poverty affecting significantly countries of origin pressured a lot of women to find jobs abroad. In receiving countries, increased demands in certain employment sectors especially in the household made migration an attractive alternative.

Feminisation of migration has led to inversion of roles within families, women becoming the breadwinners, whereas traditionally this was the man's task.

However, major social problems are arising from this pattern, as young children are often left behind by their migrating mothers, under the custody of a grandmother, an aunt and sometimes of neighbours.

Men tend to become lazier, not searching for a new job in case they are unemployed, or not trying to advance in their current jobs,

since they count on their wives' remittances.

The contribution of migrant workers to the economy in their country of origin is acknowledged. By sending back to their country of origin a portion of their earnings (remittances) they influence the country's development.

Nevertheless, migration can have an ill effect on countries of origin's development. Many countries of origin are supportive and encourage labour migration, like the Philippines, Sri Lanka, etc.

Still, uncontrolled migration can have a negative impact on developing countries, particularly those already having significant problems in terms of education, adult literacy, nutrition and child mortality.

Those countries can poorly afford to lose their most talented professionals to satisfy recruitment shortages in developed (or more developed) countries and thus must try ensuring that migration is planned and contributes to sustainable development.

Policies should be designed by sending countries governments in order to maximize the sustained development impact of remittances.

What is not acknowledged is migrants' contribution to the economy of the receiving country, where they are subject to discrimination. In receiving countries, migration flows have resulted in disinterest for certain sectors of activities (considered as "second-class") among the national population.

**Najla Chahda**

Caritas Lebanon

Yet, migrant workers suffer discrimination. In Lebanon, migrant workers (especially unskilled or low-skilled ones) tend to become the underdog (second best) of the local labour market and disadvantaged in terms of social capital, access to legal and labour market information, language barriers and ability to defend their interests.

Many of them experience maltreatment and violence, women being particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse.

In its contribution to tackle these challenges and threats, Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC) is active in the following fields:

- Protection: since 2001, regular protective presence is guaranteed inside the State Retention Center for Foreign Persons, run by the General Security. CLMC is the sole NGO among all the Lebanese NGOs allowed by General Security to work and be present at the Retention Center.
- Awareness raising and behavioural change campaign: Orientation seminars on rights and responsibilities of migrant workers in Lebanon; public awareness campaign to improve knowledge of Lebanese about migrant workers' rights and to promote a change of attitude

# INTERVENTIONS



towards migrant workers.

- Advocacy: work with UN agencies, associations and government entities to achieve changes in the legal system in the scope of respecting and better protecting migrant workers' rights.

- Exchanges with governments of sending countries, to offer accredited programs for pre-departure orientation and training, providing country-specific information about conditions of recruitment, employment, social security rights and relevant international labour standards

Caritas Lebanon considers that countries of destination should ensure equality in working rights; hold abusive employers accountable; improve the regulations of recruiting agencies; sign, ratify and respect international Conventions related to migration, and incorporate their standards in their domestic law; as well as conduct trainings to raise awareness about rights and obligations of both parties.

As far as countries of origin are concerned, Caritas Lebanon recommends that they ensure legitimate contract signing for workers travelling abroad; inform the migrants of their rights and responsibilities; monitor national recruitment agencies to ensure their compliance to regulations; and follow-up cases of their expatriates in receiving countries through the labour attaché.



## Economical impact of high-skilled workers' migration

Next speaker **Daniel Verger**, Director of international cooperation at **Secours Catholique-Caritas France**, explained in his intervention how migration of high-skilled workers can have both positive and negative impact on the economy of both countries of origin and destination.

International migration can generate substantial gain for migrants and countries of destination, but also for the countries of origin.

Indeed, the emigration of high-skilled workers can mean a gain for countries of origin because a well-educated diaspora, with a high purchasing power, can increase the export demand of goods from the countries of origin, promote technology, know-how and investment transfers, and will generate important fund transfers.

In high income countries, migration is useful to solve lack of manpower and improve the global efficacy of the economy. Migrants' remittances prove efficient when it comes to improve the living conditions of families who stayed in the home countries, and to reduce their vulnerability. It is, in this sense, a strategy to address poverty and the lack of jobs and opportunities.

However, emigration of high-skilled workers does have a controversial impact on development.

In some countries, this type of emigration can heavily handicap the performance of some public serv-

ices. For example, there are more Malawian doctors in the UK than in Malawi, and this leads to a critical lack of doctors in that country.

This issue of the brain drain in the health sector (especially doctors and nurses) of South countries has been thoroughly discussed within Secours Catholique – Caritas France, and the organisation has joined other actors to implement an advocacy campaign in France on this topic.

Main goal of this campaign was to make high-income countries benefiting from Southern manpower in the health sector understand that they need to put to an end, on the one hand, the discrimination these high-skilled migrants face in the North (non-recognition of their diplomas, lower salaries ...) and on the other hand, to adopt a coherent and ethical attitude, contributing to the establishment of good and stable working conditions in the health sector in the South.

Daniel made reference to a study conducted by the Louvain University (Belgium, 2006) about the ambiguous impact of brain drain on developing countries.

This study indicates that there is a decreasing relation between the ratios of high-skilled emigration and the size of the country: the size of the country (and with it, the level of opportunities the country offers) is a crucial key to determine the level of migration of high-skilled workers.

In the health sector, brain drain is very strong in small countries: more than 80% of emigration in this sector in the Pacific Islands or

**Daniel Verger**



the Caribbean.

Salary and working conditions are the main reasons for emigration; stability and governance in the country are also very important factors in the decision to migrate.

In this sense, it is very important that ODA contributes to the improvement of working conditions and payment of health staff in the South.

As a conclusion, we can say that analysing the impact of high-skilled workers is a difficult task because of the multiplicity of actors and factors, but brain drain does not necessarily have a negative impact on the countries of origin.

Frédéric Docquier, in the above mentioned study, analyses that when high-skilled emigration does not exceed 5 to 10% of the high-skilled workers, the impact will be eventually positive for the country of origin. If this ratio is more than 10%, then the impact will very clearly be negative for the country of origin.

There is still a lot of work to be done to establish a real long-term partnership between countries receiving these high-skilled workers, such as Western European countries, and the countries of origin.

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Such a partnership should aim at strengthening health and education services in developing countries, offer more and better paid job opportunities, and maximize the positive effects of the mobility of skilled workers.

As far as NGOs are concerned, working in synergy with universities and research centers could also be a very good way to increase the quality and precision of analyses, in a working field where reliable data is still very much missing.



## Support of returning Albanian migrants

**Tom Preku**, director of **Caritas Albania**, focused on the social actions by Caritas in support of returning Albanian migrants.

After the break down of the Communist system in 1990, Albania experienced a wave of massive emigration that lasted until 1993.

Clandestine emigration flourished from 1995 to 2004 and today, the general number of Albanian emigrants abroad shows up to 1.000.000 emigrants spread out in Western Europe (mainly in Italy and Greece) and in the USA.

Migrants' remittances play an important role in the country's economy and for the improvement of living conditions.

For many families, emigration is a practical way to escape from poverty.

Emigration has increased incomes and has improved the standard of living of emigrants and their families back home.

Albanian migrants however face many difficulties such as lack of regular documentation in countries of destination, and lack of job and integration opportunities.

For these reasons some migrants are inclined to invest their future in their home country and are motivated to return to Albania.

Caritas Albania in cooperation with Caritas Italiana and other partners has set up a 3-year project (WARM: Welcome Again – Rein-

sertion of Migrants) to support return and reintegration of Albanians who decide to return back home.

The objectives of the project, co funded by the AENEAS programme of the EU include assistance and consultative services to 300 returnees, improvement of professional and occupational capacities of 200 of them, offering job opportunities to 100 returnees and support with micro-credits to 20 returnees to start up a small scale business.

It also aims at improving professional capacities of Albanian Authorities Officials offering services to returnees and at enhancing cooperation between Institutions of both countries.

An analysis shows that in most cases people didn't leave Albania out of choice, but were forced by unemployment and a failing social security system.

It also shows that people prefer to stay in Albania or to return to it if the circumstances improve and if assistance and support is available.

Reintegration support adds a valuable dimension to voluntary return projects, contributes substantially to the sustainability of return and to the overall development of the country.

**Tom Preku**





## The reality of African irregular migrants in the Canary Islands

**Lola Correas**, Secretary General of the Diocesan **Caritas of the Canary Islands, Spain**, presented the reality of African irregular migrants arriving to the Canary Islands by boat. She explained the response given by the diocesan Caritas to these vulnerable people.

Almost every day, headlines of the newspapers talk about the arrival, caught or loss of a boat full of human beings, or about the death of some of these migrants.

In 2006, there has been a huge increase of the number of migrants arriving on the Canary Islands.

Key factor explaining this increase is that smugglers have found a new route. Indeed, after signing of the agreements between Spain and Morocco, smugglers got a lot of pressure from the Moroccan police, in the strait of Gibraltar as well as on the coasts.

In consequence, they have moved their points of departure to the South, taking advantage of the lack of control by Mauretania and Senegal.

Migration policies of the European Union and of Spain are focused on control and observation of Southern borders.

There has been an increase of controls in such a way that now, migrants are caught even before they reach the coast; they are found through radar control, intercepted at sea and brought to the coast by a

patrol. They are detained even before their arrival.

What happens then to the people intercepted by the police? They are sent directly to detention centers – where only the Red Cross has access to them – and are under the custody of the delegation of the government.

Once in the detention centers, they might be returned – the problem being that the authorities do not know where the majority of migrants comes from.

They are often left in no man's land, on their own. Other migrants might be transferred to the mainland.

In this context, the Diocesan Caritas of the Canary Islands only has access to the limited number of migrants who have managed to get through the controls, and to those arriving by plane with a tourist visa and who stay once their visa has expired.

Key actions of the response of the Diocesan Caritas of the Canary Islands can be synthesised into four main categories, aiming at providing opportunities to the migrants, promoting integration, inter-culturality and co-development.

Caritas is involved in the following activities:

- Support to initiatives of self-employment, through micro-credit
- Elaboration of tools for training and awareness-raising activities, towards migrants and locals.
- Promotion of co-development in countries of origin.

**Lola Correas**



- Networking and participation in social networks: Caritas chose to abandon a certain form of protagonism in order to avoid duplication and benefit from networking, and thus the possibility to give a more integral response to the affected population. For example, Caritas is part of an initiative launched by various actors and called the “Garden of Cultures”, where migrants from all countries and inhabitants of the Canary Islands have a possibility to meet each other and to discover the richness of cultural diversity.

- Support and strengthening of migrants' associations



## Maghrebian and Sub-Saharan migrants, working in the agricultural sector in Spain

**Juan José Peris**, Director of the Diocesan **Caritas of Huelva, Spain**, focused in his intervention on the fate of the migrants from Maghreb and Sub-Saharan Africa, working in the agricultural sector in Southern Spain.

In recent years, a phenomenon of substitution of manpower in the agricultural sector has taken place in Huelva. Immigrants from Maghreb and Sub-Saharan Africa who traditionally worked in the harvesting campaign have lost their job because employers preferred to establish more than 36.000 contracts with immigrant women, who will not stay in Spain but return to their countries of origin once the campaign is finished.

Maghreb and Sub-Saharan African migrants - documented and undocumented – who found themselves unemployed and displaced, constitute an army of manpower waiting for an opportunity to work, knowing that sooner or later the agricultural sector will need more manpower than what is covered by the contracts. About 1.200 people, mostly young men of Sub-Saharan origin, were living in precarious conditions in the year 2005. This situation explains why a substantial group of people is asking for help at the Caritas Centre for Homeless People, in search of services that can cover their basic needs.

Confronted to this sensitive situa-

tion, Caritas responds by conducting emergency operations aiming at attending basic needs of the population. This is not an easy task, for the persons are increasingly dispersed, hidden and removed from the cities.

Caritas tries to establish contact with the leaders of the groups to express its solidarity, the purposes of its work, to open a dialogue about possible forms of assistance migrants could need, including the possibility of reception in Caritas houses for the most vulnerable population.

Nowadays the migrants' settlements are visited periodically; this has also meant an effort with the local Spanish community so that they start to understand the situation faced by the migrants and to show solidarity and cooperation.

Some migrant men have seen a strategy of survival offering their sex services to other men. Caritas is also supporting these persons, being present in the areas where the immigrants work offering sex services.

For most part, migrants consider this occupation as a strategy of survival for a limited period of time, until they find a "normal" employment. For others, this strategy is also a way of obtaining easy money. In most of the cases, these young men are submitted to a high degree of vulnerability and dependence. They do their work in the street without any protection and ignore the risks to which they are exposed.

Caritas also does field work with the immigrant sex-worker women, who are mainly Nigerian. The essential difference with regard to men is that they do their activity in a more visible and located way,

**Juan José Peris**



which facilitates the possibility to visit them regularly.

In addition to guaranteeing access to basic needs, Caritas also works to improve integration with the native population. Migrants must not be seen only as "manpower". The fears of Spanish population have to be taken into consideration, and it is necessary to work with the autochthonous population to avoid segregation, xenophobia and racism. A very important aspect in the sensitisation is to explain the migratory project of these people, and to show that it is mainly due to the absence of future and opportunities in their countries of origin.

On a more global level, it makes sense to open a combined reflection between the countries of origin, transit and destination, to analyse and further reflect on the migratory phenomenon and to check strategies and performances in providing opportunities to migrants and to those who wish to live with dignity in their home countries.

# CONCLUSIONS



From the size of the audience and the intensity of discussions in small groups, we can say that this workshop, conceived as a way to explore further the issue of Migration and Development, has been a success and very good step in the reflection.

Caritas organisations are involved in a wide range of actions related both to migration and development and want to develop their reflection and action, being fully aware of the interdependence between development and migration projects.

More research, including cooperation with research institutions to support this reflection is recommended.

On the projects level, participants of the workshop call for:

- Taking into account the brain drain – brain gain paradox in development and migration projects
- Include a reintegration aspect in voluntary return projects in order to increase sustainability of return
- Further developing cooperation with migrants' associations who manage development projects through collective remittances

On the policy level, participants of the workshop call for:

- A continued advocacy for more policy coherence for development
- A critical analysis and review of the Economic Partnership Agreements
- Ratification of the International Migrant Workers' Convention

- A more balanced approach of labour migration policies, focusing more on the organisation of legal labour migration in consultation between countries of origin and countries of destination

Caritas Europa will pursue the reflection and exploration of this issue, which is extremely high today on the agenda of political institutions and concerns directly two fields of work where Caritas is present and active in an exceptional way.

Caritas Europa will organise a forum on Migration and development, inviting Caritas organisations from other regions and other partners to select priorities of Caritas action for the coming years in the field of Migration and Development.



Rue de Pascale 4 - 1040 Brussels - Belgium  
Tel: +32 (0)2 280 02 80 - Fax: +32 (0)2 230 16 58  
E-mail: [info@caritas-europa.org](mailto:info@caritas-europa.org) - Website: <http://www.caritas-europa.org>