

20 June 2024

## Europe can and must show more solidarity with refugees

On this World Refugee Day, Caritas Europa calls for a Europe that facilitates access to protection in its territory, encourages solidarity towards refugees and promotes social inclusion.

With the increasing number of wars and conflicts occurring across the world, the number of people being forced to flee their homes is at an all-time high. In 2024, 120 million people globally are estimated to be forcibly displaced, while UNHCR estimates that over three million people will be in need of resettlement in 2025, a 20% increase compared with 2024.

While several European policy makers increasingly promote the externalisation of the EU's asylum system along the lines of the infamous UK-Rwanda deal, figures show that most forcibly displaced people are not hosted in Europe. In fact, 70% of refugees and displaced people live near their countries of origin, often in very fragile contexts, such as in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East.

Now is not the time for Europe to withdraw into itself; instead, it must show solidarity and respect its responsibilities under the 1951 Refugee Convention. European leaders must resist attempts to shift their asylum responsibility to non-EU countries and stop making deals with governments that do not respect human rights in order to stop arrivals to Europe at all costs.

“ We need a confident Europe which enables safe access to its territory and protects people seeking refuge. Caritas will continue its work on the ground as well as its advocacy so that the right to asylum is upheld and that refugees are welcomed in Europe and given the opportunity to fully participate in and contribute to our societies.

**Maria Nyman**, Secretary General of Caritas Europa

Caritas Europa is concerned that the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum will limit access to protection for those in need. Several provisions will prevent access to the EU's territory or keep people in overcrowded camps in EU border countries, jeopardising access to rights while their protection claims are processed.

As EU Member States are preparing for the implementation of the Pact, we urge them to prevent blanket detention, ensure dignified and efficient asylum procedures and reception conditions.

In addition, the implementation of the Union Resettlement Framework under the Pact must ensure that more people have access to safe pathways and long-term solutions. The expansion of resettlement, humanitarian visas and family reunification should be part of the solution, in addition to the right to claim territorial asylum.

The new European Parliament can demonstrate global leadership in promoting a more welcoming Europe that respects human rights. Instead of scapegoating and stigmatising refugees, Europe must show and enact solidarity with them as well as with non-EU countries hosting refugees. A welcoming Europe also means that refugees have opportunities to thrive in, and contribute to, the communities that have welcomed them.

## Contact details

### **Leïla Bodeux**

Senior Policy and Advocacy  
Officer

Tel: +32 (0) 478 58 54 09

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

### **Susan Dabbous**

Media Officer

Tel: +32 (0)2 235 03 94

Mob: +32 (0)478 58 54 35

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

## About Caritas

Caritas Europa is a network of 49 member organisations in 46 European countries and one of the 7 regions of Caritas Internationalis. Our members assist and provide services to millions of people in need.

Caritas Europa aims at lifting people out of poverty by empowering them and by influencing unjust structures and unfair policies that keep people trapped in positions of disempowerment.