

“ZERO POVERTY PETITION”

We, people in Europe

Consider Poverty to be everybody's concern. European, national, regional and local decision-makers, together with citizens, are responsible for recognising, understanding poverty and acting against it. In this common effort solidarity must be a long-lasting commitment and – together with justice and the common good - a fundamental principle.

We commit to engage our time, skills and energy in the political, civic and personal sphere to fighting poverty and building an inclusive society.

Thus, in this European Year against Poverty and Exclusion, we urge our decision makers and politicians to commit to the following goals:

1) Eradicate child poverty in Europe

starting by halving, by 2015, the number of children living in families below the poverty line. One measure we strongly recommend is to guarantee child allowances to every child, regardless of the status of their parents.

2) Ensure minimum level of social protection for everyone

so that, by 2015, social protection systems will guarantee a decent living standard to all. Measures we strongly recommend are to guarantee decent pensions, allowances for ill people and an adequate basic income for people who do not have sufficient resources for dignified living conditions.

3) Increase the provision of social and healthcare services

by ensuring equal access (availability and affordability) for all to quality social and healthcare services by 2015.

Measures we strongly recommend are: to increase by 50% the availability of social housing in Europe; and to recognise and support Home Care as an effective social service.

4) Ensure decent jobs for all

and, by 2015, reduce unemployment below 5%.

Recommended measures are: to guarantee equal access to vocational training, life-long learning and other pathways to employment; and to offer social employment for those who need special protection.

In all these fields, special attention will be given to excluded groups of people such as migrants, ethnic minorities, people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, and disabled persons.

We give our full support to all who act in pursuit of these goals.

For further information, please contact the Caritas Europa office at 0032 2 280 02 80, or at info@caritas-europa.org

Signatures will be presented by Caritas to the relevant institutions (if we reach the benchmark of 1 million signatures).