

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2016

# PROTECTION & RESILIENCE

HAND IN HAND







19.834  
DONORS  
GAVE US THEIR  
PRECIOUS SUPPORT

150  
VOLUNTEERS  
GAVE THEIR TIME TO  
SUPPORTING ASYLUM SEEKERS  
AND REFUGEES

1.300.000  
VICTIMS  
OF THE SYRIAN CRISIS RECEIVED  
AID FROM THE CARITAS NETWORK

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## Protection and resilience, hand in hand

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### Protection

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## A word from the chairman



Dear Reader,

Each year holds surprises in store for us. Humanitarian disasters caused by Hurricane Matthew in Haiti for example. Disasters caused by conflicts such as that in Syria, among others, are all the more sad because they are inevitable. To face these dramatic events, the Emergency & Development Department has reacted once again by supporting the response from our partners in our worldwide network and giving them help.

In 2016, this Department brilliantly passed the examination for approval organised by the Department for "Cooperation in development and humanitarian aid" and obtained financing for the new five-year plan drawn up in collaboration with the Peace and Justice Commission. This partnership shows the reciprocal desire for an overall approach<sup>1</sup> by human beings through multi-faceted aid allowing them to live in the near future with dignity.

With regard to matters of asylum and migration, the surprise comes from the decision by the Government drastically to reduce the places for individual accommodation for asylum seekers. However, through this type of accommodation, set up in Belgium, these families, together with our collaborators, have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with life in a local community in Belgium. With the active help of our teams who are responsible for accommodating and supporting these migrants, this effort has most often led to rapid and harmonious integration. Unfortunately, non-government organisations that, like us, arrange places for asylum seekers in individual dwellings have seen the number of these places substantially reduced or even completely removed. For the particularly dedicated personnel of the Asylum and Migration Department, it is a harsh blow. Out of over 1.000 people to be supported according to this model on a human scale, there are now fewer than one hundred which has caused the disappearance of extensive experience accumulated over so many years of engagement in favour of these disadvantaged people who come from elsewhere and the loss of a large number of jobs.

Dear reader and friend, you are the inspiration for our dedication to living life to the full and to well-being. Without your generosity, without your sense of sharing, none of this would be possible. Caritas would implode. In the name of all of our partners, all the people in distress who find reassurance in Caritas, all our teams and our volunteers, I share your joy in having found that sharing makes the heart richer and happier from the very start of the day, relaxes the face and makes it inclined to smile. Sharing is a source of confidence given to others.

This editorial should have ended here. However, time moves on apace and what was once on a far away horizon, is now here. It is time to pass on the baton. I am leaving you after nine years of companionship in supporting the most vulnerable. I should like to express some personal thoughts and thanks in particular.

In April 2008, Pierre Géhot proposed that I should take over the presidency of the board of administrators of Caritas International. Together with the director Johan Ketelers, Pierre profoundly modernised our association, basing it upon the Gospel. Since then, the new president and the successive directors, Gonzalo Dopchie and François Cornet, supported by all the staff and volunteers, gave practical expression to this vision by physically bringing together in the same 'rue de la Charité', the regional, federal and European branches of Caritas. This new geographic location has helped to bring together and give coherence to the activities of these different elements of the charitable work of the Belgian Catholic Church. This increased collaboration around the same table has now led not only to the common management of logistics but has also promoted exchanges of experience and the sharing of responsibilities to help the most vulnerable, wherever and wherever they are.

This development is the fruit of a common vision initiated by my friend Dominic Verhoeven, vice-chairman of our association and director of Caritas Vlaanderen. He has been and is today still its kingpin.

Dear Reader

To write one last time a few lines as president of this formidable association is a privileged moment, a time for reflection on the human condition and the common good that we share with those we wish to help find dignity in life. It is also an opportunity to look for the message that best describes the commitment of the team of which I shall always be a part. I truly love this adventure shared with all those whose names appear in the following pages, including those of the members of the management committee, as well as the directors already mentioned, Marie-Paule, Bernard, Philippe, Patrick and Michel.

To say goodbye is to hint at the question of Hope. Will we see each other again and in what form? As the father of five children and grandfather to 20 grandchildren, I am increasingly thinking about this subject, as well as the world of communication which is their world and that is overflowing with information, taking often contradictory positions in all areas, games that are sometimes very violent, reducing the time for personal reflection on our place and our actions in an infinite universe. I want everyone to decide regularly to sit down with a blank sheet of paper before them, to switch off the stopwatch on a frantic life, to establish silence around them and to find out who they have become and what to do.

I should also like to say that Caritas is "of the Church" and proud of being so under the leadership of our remarkable advisory bishops, Monseigneurs Aloïs Jousten, Luk Van Looy and recently Jean-Pierre Delville. We feel that we are in communion with them as they advocate a Church that, as Pope François has said, supports human beings without imposing anything upon them or placing prohibitions upon them. How could it be otherwise since God wants man to be free and responsible? How is it possible for human beings to love if they are not free?

I should like to thank them as well as the chairman of the Episcopal Conference, Monseigneur Léonard yesterday and his Eminence Cardinal Jozef De Kesel today, for the trust they have shown in me over many years, and still show today, in accepting my appointment as chairman of Caritas in Belgium and still show today.

Lastly, finding a successor is usually no mean task. However, this time it was very simple. Frank De Coninck and I share this vision of a common house. In an unusual career, he has acquired exceptional experience of Belgian society as well as of the world and in particular countries in Central Africa who have been our partners over so many years in improving the lot of their peoples. His path led him to Rome and opened the gates of the Curia to him. What luck his presence among us is for Caritas as he will guide us with assurance and will preside with diplomacy over countless meetings, committees and conferences of Caritas International. I can therefore pass on the baton to him in complete harmony.

Michel Verhulst, ir,  
Admiral, o.s.,  
Chairman

<sup>1</sup> An identical development is being made at the Vatican in the administrative division for integral human development established on 01 January of this year by Pope François together with Cardinal Turkson as the administrator responsible.





## Thanks

Without the precious support of numerous people, associations and organisations, all our projects could not have been successfully completed. This is why we should particularly like to thank:

- All of our private donors
- All of our enthusiastic volunteers and supportive property owners
- The bishops, parishes and religious congregations
- Businesses, foundations and non-profits
- Our umbrella organizations: Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen / CIRÉ / 11.11.11 / CNCD / Ngo-federatie / Acodev / Concord / Voice
- The media, and in particular: Kerknet, Kerk & Leven, Tertio, the 'Thomas' website of the KU Louvain, Cathobel (Dimanche and RCF) / La Libre Belgique (Move with Africa)
- Caritas Internationalis / Caritas Europa / Caritas in Belgium / Netwerk Rechtvaardigheid en Vrede / Commission Justice & Paix / Brabantia, the ERSO network / the Belgian Consortium 12-12 and all of our partners in Belgium and abroad
- The schools, teachers and youth movements that participated enthusiastically in our activities
- Our collaborators in Belgium and abroad who, day after day, make our commitments a reality
- Our institutional partners:
  - The United Nations**  
UN pooled Funds / Unicef
  - The European Union**  
ECHO / DG Devco / Fonds européen pour les Réfugiés / Fonds européen pour le Retour / Asylum, Migration and Integration fund (AMIF)
  - The Federal Government**  
Direction de la Coopération au Développement (DGD) / Fonds Belge pour la Sécurité Alimentaire (FBSA) / Belgian Development Agency / Agence fédérale pour l'accueil des demandeurs d'asile (Fedasil) / Secrétariat d'Etat à l'Asile et la Migration, à l'Intégration sociale et à la Lutte contre la pauvreté / SPF Emploi, Travail et Concertation sociale – Maribel social / La Loterie Nationale
  - The Wallonia-Brussels Federation and Walloon Region**  
Wallonie Bruxelles International (WBI) / Département Travaux publics, Santé, Action sociale et Patrimoine
  - The Brussels Capital Region**  
Actiris, Office régional bruxellois de l'emploi

### **The Flemish Community**

Departement Internationaal Vlaanderen: Vlaams Agentschap voor Internationale Samenwerking (VAIS) / Departement Leefmilieu, Natuur en Energie / Departement Onderwijs

### **Provinces, towns and municipalities**



François Cornet, Director

*"Our heartfelt thanks to all those who have given us their trust."*

François Cornet, Director

## Caritas International

### Who we are

Caritas International is a Belgian non-governmental organisation. Within Caritas Belgica, it is the Belgian member of a global network of 165 Catholic organisations working together in 200 countries and regions.

### Our vision

Caritas International works towards a world of peace, solidarity and justice, in which the dignity of each person is a fundamental value and wealth is shared between everyone. Caritas International is inspired by a Christian vision of man and society, based on the gospel. Every person, wherever they live, has the right to a dignified life and should be able to enjoy their fundamental rights. Access to healthy food, clean drinking water, medical care, education, employment and decent housing should be guaranteed.

Our work is founded on the values of solidarity and subsidiarity. No country or organization can solve all problems on their own. Only by joining forces can we expect to achieve sustainable solutions.



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### Our mission

Caritas International gives support to victims of war, natural disasters and poverty, whether they are in their country of origin or migrants on the run. This is done in collaboration with the national and international networks that Caritas International is a member of. We carry out our mission irrespective of one's background, nationality, sex, political, philosophical or religious beliefs. Caritas International helps the most vulnerable people and supports them in finding durable solutions.

Caritas International and our partners provide effective assistance in the case of crisis. Following the initial emergency phase, we set up rehabilitation and development projects in order to enable the beneficiaries to become self-sufficient.

Caritas International receives asylum seekers and defends their rights as migrants with material, social and legal aid, whether in Belgium or in their country of origin. We fight against the injustice and difficulties that our beneficiaries face and work to improve the process and find solutions. We use our expertise to provide the public all over the world with information and education.



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## 01

Protection and resilience, hand in hand

## Protection

**1** Syria: helping victims of violence survive

**More than 6.5 million Syrians are fleeing from their own country. Caritas offers them a roof and helps them survive.**

Caritas is one of the few humanitarian organizations still active in Syria in 2016. Since the beginning of the conflict, Caritas has been helping vulnerable families in the regions of Horan, Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Hassake, and along the coast. The human tribute paid to war is enormous. Houses are bombed, schools and hospitals are not spared. Life expectancy has fallen by 13 years since the beginning of the conflict and 4 Syrians out of 5 live in poverty, but Caritas Syria can count on a strong local network to reach the victims and do its job well.

*The coastline offers some security*

Aleppo is only the shadow of the bustling city it once was. Formerly the financial and industrial center of Syria, it was also known for its magnificent heritage. In 2016, after long months of siege, the city was ravaged by bombs and fighting. The relatively safe Syrian coastline has become a refuge for families able to flee the conflict. Since 2011, the population of this region has increased by a half million to 1 million inhabitants.

In the coastal region, Caritas International supports Caritas Syria with other members of the Caritas international network. We distribute coupons for food, clothing, and hygiene items. We also offer medical assistance and help to improve living conditions. In December, the government rejected the rebels outside the eastern districts of Aleppo, a signal for many refugees to return. Caritas also offers immediate help.

*Syria: peace is possible*

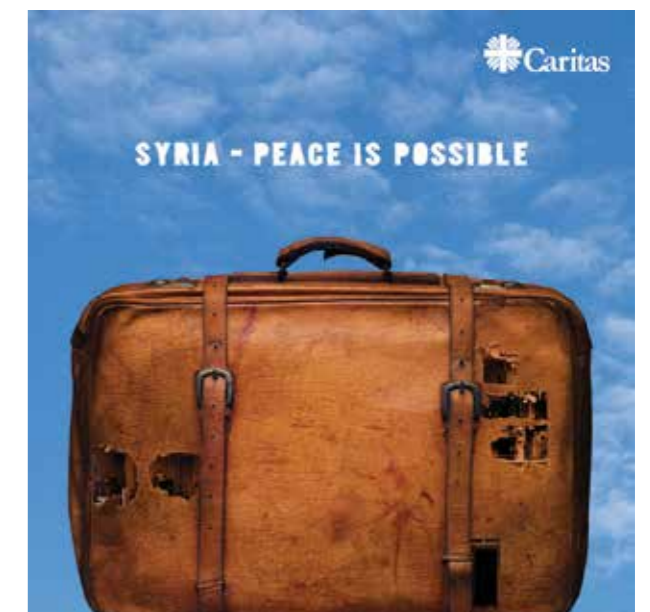
Caritas International Belgium participates in the campaign of solidarity with Syria: peace is possible, launched by Caritas Internationalis. Caritas appeals to all its sympathizers around the world to exert pressure on their governments.

We urge:

- to bring all parties together around the table and to seek a peaceful solution,
- to help the millions of people who suffer from war,
- to restore hope and dignity to the Syrians in their country and abroad.

*"As people die, huge sums of money are spent on armaments. We must find a solution, and this solution cannot be violence, because violence can only result in new wounds."*

Pope Francis supports the campaign "Syria: peace is possible" by Caritas Internationalis, 5 July 2016.





## 2 Haiti: humanitarian aid after Hurricane Matthew

**First, provide shelter and food. Then, repair the houses as soon as possible to avoid the uprooting of families towards the camps. Ensuring access to drinking water to prevent water-related diseases.**

### Ravage and Distress

On the night of October 3rd to 4th, Hurricane Matthew swept across the western part of the country with winds of up to 240 km / hour. Consequences included: floods, landslides, uprooted trees, dead animals, damaged or destroyed infrastructure, homes and schools ... and immense human suffering.

- 1.4 million people need humanitarian aid
- 175.000 people live in temporary shelters
- +/- 1.000 deaths
- 34 cholera treatment centers destroyed
- 80% of the electricity network is damaged in the Southern Department
- 90% of houses are damaged or destroyed in the departments of Sud, Grande-Anse, and Nippes

### Caritas Network Focuses on Food, Drinking Water and Housing

Caritas Haiti goes into action immediately: employees distribute food parcels and hygiene kits (including water purification tablets) in villages and makeshift shelters. Caritas has built up sufficient stocks to cope with the crisis during the first few days. As soon as weather permits, the needs are assessed.

The Caritas network develops an emergency plan and helps 3,380 vulnerable families (16,940 people) in the first two months. The emphasis is on food, drinking water, hygiene items, and housing. We work mainly in remote areas where the authorities have not yet offered assistance. We are active in the dioceses of Jérémie, Cayes, Port-au-Prince, Port-de-Paix, Nippes, and Jacmel.

The parcels are made in Port-au-Prince with the help of volunteers and then transported to the different villages. As soon as food and materials are available again in local markets, Caritas buys the goods locally. We support the local economy and avoid costly transportation on roads that are sometimes very dangerous.

Thanks to the solidarity of its supporters, Caritas International can contribute financially to the purchase of goods and support its local partner, Caritas Haiti, in



© Martine Haentjens

### Ms. Justa Lamisère, a victim of Hurricane Matthew

*"Our house is badly damaged. With my husband and 4 children, we slept a few days with the neighbors. Cassava had not yet been harvested when the disaster struck. Now it is buried under debris, trees, and bushes that have been torn off. Most plants are rotting because of heavy rains. The crop is completely lost. Fortunately, sweet potatoes had already been harvested."*

### Reconstruction has already begun

Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world. Since the 2010 earthquake, Caritas International has been working not only to rebuild houses. In collaboration with the population in the south of the island, we also support family farming. We are fighting against deforestation and we create employment as well as helping communities organize themselves into cooperatives to work together to achieve better results.

Today, it is precisely these populations that are hit the hardest by Hurricane Matthew. All efforts to improve living conditions in the dioceses of Jacmel, Cayes, and Jeremiah are almost destroyed. Caritas International, together with its local partner organizations, is making every effort to ensure that these populations can get back on track as quickly as possible. We are allowing a revival of agriculture and / or fishing. We work to prevent contagious diseases such as cholera as well as repairing

houses and protecting the environment. This program began in October 2016 and continues until the end of February 2017. It reaches 20.000 people.

*"We must repair the houses as quickly as possible and thus prevent people from being hosted in camps and uprooted. We must also ensure that farmers can return to the field as soon as possible, so that they can earn a living and produce food. Especially since the winter crop season is approaching."*

Martine Haentjens, Head of Program Haiti  
9 October 2016.



© Marie Arago/CRS



### 3 Niger: transitional shelter for refugees

**To enable people to recover, promote solidarity and mutual understanding, and create a sense of security.**

Boko Haram has been sowing the seeds of terror for years in neighboring Nigeria. The radical Islamist group wants to establish an Islamist state there. Looting, rape, and suicide bombings have caused hundreds of thousands of people to flee, including to Niger, however, Boko Haram has also been active since 2015. Nigerians leave the Komadougou river basin, the natural border between Niger and Nigeria. They leave to live in certain districts of the city of Diffa or along the two hundred kilometers of the long main road.

#### Caritas helps outside the camps

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees manages the large camps. Our local Caritas partner assists refugees who come together spontaneously in and around Diffa. They sleep under the stars or in wooden huts or millet stems. They start small. When they have gathered enough materials, they will 'enlarge'. Caritas is responsible for bringing soap, kitchen utensils, mosquito nets and water purification tablets. The program is co-financed by Caritas International.

#### Nourishment remains a problem

Most people are just relieved to be safe. Some have taken their cattle or have some money to buy food. But food remains a major problem for both refugees and the local population. The border region around Diffa lives on agriculture: the cultivated peppers, the workers dry them, and then the traders sell them. Today, they have lost this income, because work in the field has become too dangerous.

1.000 refugee families each month receive 42 euros for seven months. The same amount is paid to 1.000 Nigerian families for 4 months. They can buy food, but also poultry or create a small business to generate income. 500 young people in Diffa have the opportunity to earn some money by cleaning the streets or doing other community tasks. They also receive training on topics such as interreligious dialogue, leisure activities for young children, volunteer work and conflict management.

*"We have heard the most horrible stories. But what struck me most was the dignity of most of these refugees: despite their misery, they did not sit idly by. They do everything to build 'something' with the little they have."*

Luc Van Hoef, logistics associate.



© Luc Van Hoef



© Luc Van Hoef

#### **In the meantime, we are continuing our efforts in the Dakoro region with a decentralized and participatory food security project (2014-2016).**

The program reduced the vulnerability and food insecurity of the population of Birnin Lallé and Adjékoria (Dakoro) through capacity building of individuals, agricultural organizations, and community structures. Approximately 45.000 vulnerable people are involved in this project, nearly 57% of the inhabitants of the area. The 2014 - 2016 program was carried out with the support of the Belgian Fund for Food Safety.

#### **Some results of the program:**

The rehabilitation of agricultural land is one of the best strategies to increase the agricultural production of families: yield 506 kg of millet / ha.

Culinary awareness and demonstrations by community leaders are bearing fruit. Prevention activities reduced the number of people with nutritional deficiencies by 50.4%.

The subsidy of peanut bags for 7 groups of women who produce oil, as well as additional training, have borne fruit. The average income of the participants now stands at € 32 per week, while other income-generating activities earn on average only € 22.

With this income, for example, women were able to buy a cart to harness their donkeys, food for their families, paid school fees or medical expenses for their children, or paid for some repairs to their homes...

Food banks that the residents manage themselves seem to be an important means of increasing their



## 4 The reception of asylum seekers in Belgium

**The term "protection" makes complete sense here: a person who feels legitimately in danger and cannot be protected in his or her own country has the right to seek asylum in a third country. During the examination of this asylum application, Belgium organizes the reception of asylum seekers for the duration of the procedure. Caritas International has been collaborating in this welcoming process for nearly 17 years.**

In June 2016, the Belgian government announced the closure of 10.000 places in Belgium and, a little later, a drastic reduction in the number of individual places, including those managed by Caritas International via an agreement between the government and the cupolas Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen and CIRE. Following this decision, Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen decided to stop organizing the reception of asylum seekers. CIRE maintains 166 places of reception, against 800 beginning 2016.

### Decrease in asylum applications

Beginning in 2016, the aftermath of the hosting crisis of 2015 still exists. Caritas International had a total of 947 individual accommodation spaces and 240 collective centers (Spa and Scherpenheuvel). Collective centers open in an emergency so that no asylum seeker has to sleep in the street.

As early as January 2016, the number of asylum applications introduced in Belgium began declining due to two major elements: the closure of the Balkan route and the agreement between the European Union and Turkey.

### The cause?

Indeed, as of March 2016, Slovenia, Hungary, and Macedonia made it impossible to cross the border that 850.000 migrants have taken in 2015 to reach northern Europe. "Slovenia no longer allows paperless migrants to transit through its territory. Only those who plan to seek asylum in the small Republic or those who wish to cross the border on humanitarian grounds are allowed to pass." The humanitarian situation at the borders of these countries - full winter - is catastrophic.

At the same time, since 18 March 2016, the EU - Turkey Agreement has entered into law. This agreement makes it possible to return irregular migrants from Greece to Turkey. The cost of return operations for irregular migrants is covered by the EU. The plan also states that Turkey must also take all necessary measures to prevent new routes of irregular migration from opening towards the EU. Another measure foreseen by the agreement: for each Syrian returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian is resettled from Turkey to the European Union. Thus, not only does the EU - Turkey agreement legitimize push-backs, it also organizes a kind of exchange of human beings. Caritas International and Caritas Europa strongly oppose this agreement.

### What are the consequences for Caritas International?

These "European" measures are immediately felt: the number of applications for asylum introduced in Belgium falls even though by the end of 2016, nearly 60.000 migrants are trapped in Greece, on the islands of Lesbos or Chos.

The Secretary of State in charge of asylum and migration announces the closure of a large number of places of reception. In 2016, we closed the collective center of Spa (70 places) and must drastically decrease our reception centers for individual housing.

*"This is the end of an era for this NGO project. For nearly 17 years, Caritas International has been organizing the reception of asylum seekers in individual dwellings, in collaboration with a network of other NGOs. The model is, not only the cheapest (35 euros pp / day), but also ensures the privacy of the people and emphasizes the autonomy of the family, an advantage for the asylum seeker, the company, and state funds. We do not understand that decision."*

Florence Lobert, Head of the Asylum Seeker Service.

Caritas International will nevertheless continue to welcome asylum seekers: "Only very vulnerable people will still be sent to us," Lobert adds: "In the new hosting model, individual housing will no longer be for admitted refugees or persons with a high probability of being admitted. Our concern is that asylum seekers who do not meet sufficient criteria for vulnerability risk - if the procedure lasts - remaining in the reception centers for a long time, which is destructive to them and leads to various pathologies of a psychological nature."

What future then for these places? "We have not yet terminated all leases," says Florence Lobert, "Firstly because all our families have not yet been resettled, and secondly because some of these houses are already serving and will still serve to organize the transition towards the autonomy of vulnerable refugees (see page 29)".

### What is the future for these houses?

In order to organize the reception of asylum seekers in single-family dwellings, Caritas International had built up an important housing stock thanks to a network of solidarity-based owners. At the end of 2016, we still have 906 individual places (and 174 places of collective reception).



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Collective home in Scherpenheuvell

Since November 2015, the Scherpenheuvell asylum seekers' reception center has housed up to 174 people. Residents receive high-quality psycho-socio-legal and administrative support that enables them to promote their autonomy and integration.

In 2016, 404 people were welcomed in Scherpenheuvell. 44% of them are children.

"People who have left the center spent an average of 137 days with us," explains Michel Toemans, head of the center, "unfortunately, some procedures are even longer. Our Afghan residents, for example, have been waiting for news for more than 17 months. Some have not yet had an initial interview with the General Commission for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRA), responsible for processing the asylum application on merit. A long stay in a collective center is clearly harmful to the well being of these people and to intra-family relations."



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Nationalities Top 10



	Syria	103	39%
	Afghanistan	60	23%
	Iraq	57	22%
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	10	4%
	Russia	7	3%
	Libya	7	2%
	Ukraine	5	2%
	Kosovo	5	2%
	Albania	5	2%
	Djibouti	3	1%



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Reception of particularly vulnerable women and mothers

Since 2010, the Logis de Louvranges of Caritas International have hosted single women or children. In 2016, we welcomed 18 newcomers with 42 children.

"The best result for us is that 93% of women leave our structures with status or family reunification," adds Nathalie Braun, project coordinator, "so we have a lot of positive decisions that allow these women to rebuild themselves."

Gender-based violence

"A first profile of women we welcome are women victims of gender-based violence," explains Nathalie Braun, "they have undergone genital mutilation or have been forcibly married. Sometimes it is on the road to exile that they have been abused: it happens in camps where the sanitary facilities are mixed or where smugglers carry out immigration procedures. Lone women are the most at risk; the trauma they experience is important and persistent. To best accompany these women, we set up an extensive network around them, with specialized partners on the issue - such as GAMS for example - but also with specialized doctors and psychologists."

Several children

Other profiles: (young) pregnant women, women who have just given birth or who are accompanied by several children. "There are many problems," continues Nathalie, "women who are responsible for many children are often unstructured. After all that the family has lived through, they are reassured to be finally safe, that they relax completely and reach the limit of psychological decompensating. This requires close support, for example, in hygiene education, balanced meals, etc." For young mothers, they sometimes suffer from problems of attachment to the child (for example, if it is the fruit of rape) or must learn to take care of it. "We then put in place close monitoring systems among others thanks to our nurses who are in Louvranges on a daily basis."

The common denominator for all these women? A real suffering and the need to be accompanied to learn autonomy.

*"Many of them need to (re) learn how to fend for themselves. Our working methodology goes in this direction while proposing a place of living that brings them the necessary security."*

Nathalie Braun, coordinator of the Logis.

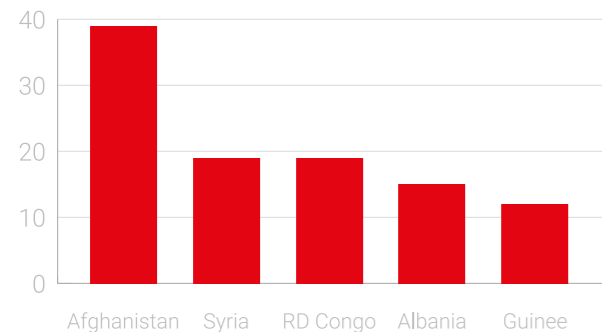


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## 5 Guardianship of Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (MENA)

In 2016, our team of 6 professional tutors accompanied 212 MENA, with 112 guardianships begun in 2016.



In 2016, 32 young people accompanied by our services enjoyed a limited stay, 36 of an unlimited stay and unfortunately 49 ended the year without a residence permit.

Among these 49 young people, some have reached the age of 18 and have chosen to remain in Belgium. They are therefore in an irregular situation. This category also corresponds to young people whose lawyer and guardian still assess the procedure to be initiated. Among these young people, some procedures have just

been introduced, such as the MENA procedure, and the first hearings have not yet taken place, while 9 of them have been ordered to leave the territory.

Only 3 young people were able to benefit from a family reunion and 1 youth was able to obtain a stay based on regularization.

In 2016, 4 young people, followed by our tutors, voluntarily returned to their country of origin, namely Albania, Morocco, and Macedonia (2 young people), with the support of the Reintegration Unit of Caritas International.

### Privileged partner: CAP Brabantia

Front-line reception, MENA guardianship and visits to closed centers are made possible thanks to the close collaboration between Caritas International and CAP Brabantia, Caritas International. This antenna is located in the very building of Caritas which allows a continuous exchange and a constant collaboration.



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## 6 First line / social service

Caritas International ensures a first-class welcome to all foreigners, irrespective of their status or nationality. From this first line reception, migrants are either assisted by our front-line service (for voluntary return, any request concerning social rights, family reunification, right of residence or any other matter), or redirected to our more specific projects, or to other services or institutions.

### Family reunion

In 2016, the social service supported 993 people in their requests for family reunification. Contacts were either individual or through collective information sessions.

In 2016, the social service organized 14 information sessions in French and 2 in Arabic on family reunification. In total, 260 people were informed through this process.

### Closed Center Visits

Foreigners who reside on Belgian territory without the required documents as well as persons arriving at the border without documents are liable to be detained in a closed center. Caritas International visits the detainees of the repatriation center 127 alternatively in Steenokkerzeel on a weekly basis.

Caritas International opposes the confinement of foreigners for reasons of migration policy, but since the practice is common in Belgium, it is essential for us to visit the detainees, offer them attentive listening, explain their rights, possibly offer legal aid, and monitor their conditions of detention. Thus, we are trying to guarantee access to the basic rights of these people.

In 2016, the employees of Caritas International followed 120 people detained in 127 bis.

"During our visits to the 127, we met several times with a man from Chechnya," explains Mélissa De Mets, who visits the center every week. "He had been locked up for some time and his 11 and 12 year old children were living in a house back in Zulte with their grandmother. Why the

authorities separated them is not clear to us. The father could very well have resided with his children. Eventually, the family was admitted and granted refugee status. During the period of confinement, the children missed their exams and were unable to attend school. For them, being separated from their father was a very traumatic experience. Was it really necessary to send them back home? To split the family?"

### Permanence in Zeebrugge

Different groups of migrants wishing to join the UK attempt to cross through Zeebrugge. They often have few resources and sleep on the street for a long time as well as suffer from regular medical problems. They generally have little information on asylum procedures and the opportunities available to them in Belgium and the United Kingdom.

In collaboration with Médecins du Monde and the Bishopric of Brugge, Caritas International has set up a care and information center to meet legal, medical, and humanitarian needs in Zeebrugge. Caritas International is responsible for the information and legal aspects of the permanence. In 2016, nearly 120 people had contact with our services.

### Micro-projects in 2016:

- "Up Together": in collaboration with Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), we provide irregular people with temporary accommodation, which allows them to take stock and think peacefully in the future.
- Item 32: permanence at the place of reception for precarious persons opened by the Pastoral Unit of Brussels. We ensure a careful listening and information about the social rights, housing, work, etc.



## 02

Protection and resilience, hand in hand

## Resilience



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**1** Burundi: together, solidarity network

**Mutual solidarity and a common approach to problems will lead to lasting results. Even in difficult conditions.**

**Solidarity and collaboration**

Since 2006, Caritas International has been dedicated to family farming and the fight against poverty in Burundi. And it's necessary! Burundi is one of the poorest countries in the world.

Take the Moso region. Presently, some 6.000 peasant families are working hard. With our local partners, we accompany them, but the farmworkers learn especially from each other. They learn how they can produce more, how to create a small vegetable garden and explain the importance of a varied diet. We show them how the cultivation of terraces and grasses prevents the erosion of hill land by rain. We promote a combination of agriculture, livestock, and silviculture. Pressure on the environment is thus reduced and diversity generates more income.

The goal? Let the farmers produce enough food for their families, and also surpluses that they can sell on the market. For Caritas, tailor-made accompaniment, solidarity and collaboration go hand in hand. Thus, solidarity groups ensure among other things that the first small goats we distribute are redistributed among the farmers who do not yet have goats. Thanks to a call to our donors in December, we were able to distribute 806 goats and 141 Billy goats.

**Disorders and Abuses**

The wave of unrest began in Burundi in April 2015, when President Pierre Nkurunziza announced that he would run for a third term. Despite persistent protests in the streets against his candidacy - judged unconstitutional - Nkurunziza persevered.

On July 21, he won the controversial presidential elections. Since then, hundreds of people have been killed. More than 300.000 Burundians are fleeing for fear of violence. Mainly to neighboring countries, Tanzania and Rwanda where the Caritas teams take care of the reception. Those who remain, live in fear and uncertainty. They live from day to day.

**Income and disaster preparedness**

In this difficult context, Caritas International continues to promote, alongside its local partners and agriculture workers, a dignified life in solidarity with the poorest. However, political instability still disrupts the economy and stifles entrepreneurship. Long-term work is not simple in some areas, such as the Rutana province, which is also hit by severe flooding. We offer opportunities for people to work in community projects (e.g. repair of roads and irrigation canals). In exchange for that, they earn a little money to buy what they need. At the same time, we are working on a catastrophe plan and concrete measures to avoid as much as possible crisis situations or, in any case, to be able to cope better with them: reforestation, fire prevention, savings groups...



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**Fideste Ucuru, Musumba hill in Kinyinya, treasurer of the Twitezimbere savings group, a women's association:**

*"Here, men used plastic bags to germinate the seeds. They protect against termites, but pollute the soil. A Caritas employee asked us if we could make these baskets out of banana leaves. At first a little astonished by this suggestion, we asked questions around us. And we found someone, Berchmans Singanya, who had already realized in the past. And he taught us how to do it.*

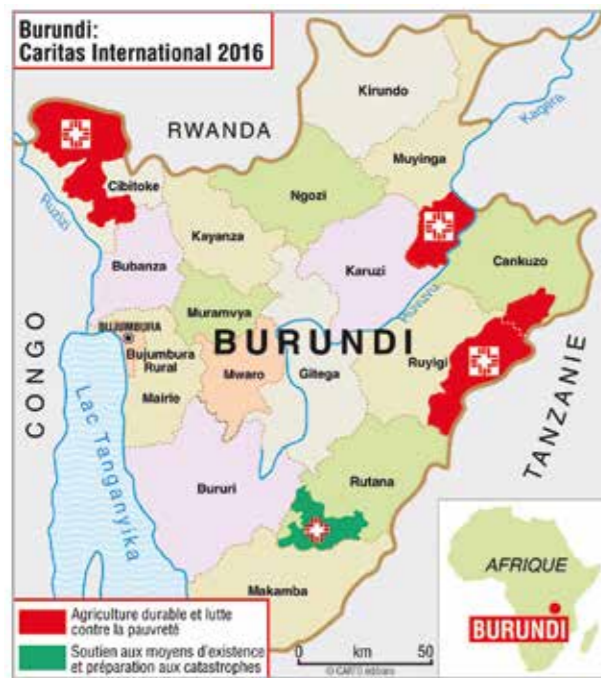
*At first, it took a long time, and we did not have the right equipment. But today, we make about thirty a day. We are very enthusiastic, and our husbands too. Over time, the banana leaves disintegrate and become fertilizer for the plants ... a very good thing. Thus, we increase our income for the family. Half of the profits belong to our organization, for solidarity-based savings, and loans. In the near future, we will set up other projects. The other half of the profits is distributed among the members of the organization."*



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*"Giving people the means and the desire to tackle problems is what we are doing."*

Grégory Claus, Program Manager in Burundi.



## 2 Ethiopia: food security and repair mechanisms

**The availability of drinking water and fodder for livestock makes livestock larger and more resistant. Women's empowerment and employment make households better armed against adversity. Savings cooperatives give young people hope and faith in the future as well as an approach to resilience from different angles.**

This project was co-financed by the European Union and carried out in a consortium from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2016, alongside Caritas International and its partner ECC-SDCO (Catholic Church of Ethiopia - Social Coordination and Development Office), IDE, VITA and AMREF. Caritas International and ECC-SDCO were responsible for the livestock and employment components of the program, while AMREF, IDE and VITA were respectively responsible for health care and agricultural production. 7.200 households have improved their living conditions.

### Unemployed women and youth counterattack

Caritas International has succeeded with its partner ECC-SDCO (Caritas Ethiopia) in bringing 1.800 women into savings and credit groups. Each of these women received 3 goats or sheep as start-up capital and support in the development of their income-generating activity. According to a conservative estimate, some 65% of women have managed to buy 1 dairy cow, which has a direct impact on the diet of the family, mainly children. Savings and credit groups were able to save considerable sums of money, which were subsequently re-used to provide loans for members' income-generating activities.

With the intervention of Caritas and the development of 5 points of watering, the livestock is better. Each pool has a capacity of 3.750 m<sup>3</sup>, which is sufficient to cover the daily water needs of about 1,000 head. Finally, we introduce a more productive bovine breed and better forage plants.

Today, 132 young people who were unemployed were organized into groups and invested in a chicken farm or in the fattening of cattle, sheep, and goats and earned income.

And no less important: the communities concerned have also benefited from training on disaster risk reduction and the early warning system.

### Food insecurity and poverty: various causes

Many households in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (southwestern Ethiopia) suffer from food insecurity and poverty, often severe and chronic. In the three districts of the Wolaita area (Damot Pulasa, Dugna Fango and Boloso Sorie) where we are active, some 42.000 inhabitants are concerned.

The causes? Less agricultural land per household (on average 0.2 ha, 10% of households are landless), falling soil fertility due to intensive land use, irregular rainfall, and drought, diseases of crops and few opportunities for the development of income-generating activities and / or scarcity of jobs outside agriculture.



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... "I had a nightmare, but it's definitely over."

Tadelech is 40 years old. She lives in Damot Pulusa (Golo Shanto Kebele). She has 4 children. Her husband died 6 years ago. In his lifetime, they could barely make ends meet. After his death, life was no more than misery. She was unable to work her plot for lack of financial means and there was no work for working women during the day. The money she earned with her local alcohol production - after a small loan - was barely enough to feed her children one day a week.

*"In 2014, the qebelé development committee selected me to participate in the Caritas program, because I was one of the poorest of our qebelé. We were first told about the importance of working together. And we have learned to raise ruminants. I received 3 ewes and I took good care of it. After 3 months, a small ram was born and after 4 months, the other sheep also had 2 small lambs. I sold the ram after 6 months for 1,100 birrs - which allowed me to repay my loan and produce more alcohol. With the income of 4 other small sheep, I bought a cow carrying."*

The group that was created to give women a chance to earn some money has in the meantime become a savings and credit cooperative. Thanks to short-term loans, Tadelech was able to expand its business and expand its small farm.

*"I was having a real nightmare, but this one is definitely over. Today I own 1 dairy cow and 2 sheep. I was able to hire a day laborer for my small farm and my harvest was good. I bought material to replace my straw roof with a metal sheet. Today I have an income of 300 birrs a week, whereas before that I only earned 100 birrs. I can give 3 meals a day to my children and send them to school. Thanks to the project, I am now a respected woman with an average income."*

### 3 Lebanon: treatment of trauma and education

**Special attention is given to children. We are helping children of refugees to overcome their traumatic experiences and ensure that they can return to school. We are also helping disadvantaged Lebanese children return to school: an indispensable condition for a promising future.**

#### Basic needs

At least 1 inhabitant in 4 in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee. Most of them live in makeshift camps, rent a small room to Lebanese at exorbitant prices or seek shelter in empty buildings. They have abandoned everything; their savings melted like snow in the sun and finding a job is almost impossible. The needs are crying. Often there are only potatoes and rice on the menu.

Caritas International supports the activities of its partner Caritas Lebanon:

Through different centers throughout the country:

- (coupons for) food,
- (coupons for) basic needs (hygiene kits, blankets, clothes...),
- financial assistance for rent,
- medical and psychological care, including through mobile clinics,
- juridical assistance.

#### Back to school

Children and adolescents in exile are particularly vulnerable. They live in tiny apartments or unhealthy slums, barely have access to medical care. Boredom leads to violence, alcohol, drugs, and crime. Poverty forces them to work underground with all the risks that follow (ill-treatment, prostitution, human trafficking, etc.).

Indeed, children should be in school, but unfortunately this is not obvious to everyone, as the formal education classes are overcrowded. In addition, parents are often forced to make their children work because their incomes are insufficient. When children of refugees get a place in school, there is a great risk that after a short time they will turn their backs on school. And for many reasons: many children suffer from trauma and stress, as they have experienced horrible things. They have a great deal of difficulty concentrating on the subject and adapting with difficulty to their new environment. In Syria, children have math and science courses in Arabic. In Lebanon, instruction is given in French or in English, so that Arabic-speaking Syrian children find it difficult to follow, especially when they have not been to school for months.

Dropping out of school, especially among refugee children, and repeated repetition, is a serious problem.

#### September Campaign

In September, when our children are also returning to school, we are launching a 'back-to-school' campaign for Syrian refugee children. With a radio spot, a lot of information on our website, on Facebook and Twitter, a letter to our supporters and a campaign magazine, we call for solidarity. It is expressed not only by donations of money, but also by addressing words of hope and encouragement to the refugees. Rita Rhayem, the director of Caritas Lebanon, comes especially to Belgium to support our action. She enters into dialogue with the staff, with some of our donors, with journalists and politicians, and maps out the explosive situation in her country.

For over 10 years, Caritas Lebanon has run a program in Bourj Hammoud, a poor suburb of Beirut, which has succeeded in bringing down school absenteeism successfully. This program has been an example for other neighborhoods. Thanks to the generosity of many donors, Caritas can extend its activities amongst others to Furn El Chebbak, a southern suburb of Beirut.



*Tomorrow is the start of classes! For refugee children in Lebanon too. Share your words of hope on [caritasinternational.be](https://twitter.com/caritasinternational) #refugees2school.*

September Campaign on Twitter.

*"The needs are enormous, with our vast expertise and experience, we are doing what we can to help as many people as possible."*

Rita Rhayem, director of Caritas Lebanon.

## Educating for Global Citizenship

To give young people an insight into the environment of young Syrian refugees and to invite them to bring messages of hope in a creative way: this is the intention of our action "Christmas in exile".

A complete pedagogical file is available for teachers and facilitators. 28 schools, or 1.038 pupils, wrote a card or letter to children their age in Lebanon. 15 sections of different youth movements, 581 young people, also responded. Caritas Lebanon distributes this mail and organizes educational activities on the basis of messages sent from Belgium.



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## 4 DR Congo: early warning system

**The sooner the emergency is reported, the quicker the population can react, so as to limit its consequences.**

There will always be emergency situations where emergency aid saves lives: violence against women and children, armed conflicts, food shortages, epidemics and natural disasters. Caritas International Belgium has acquired considerable experience in the field of humanitarian aid in the former province of Equateur in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in various fields. In 2016, we are working with UNICEF to develop a more effective system for reporting emergencies and increasing the quality of interventions.

### Local Area Network

Caritas can count on the strong decentralized presence of the Catholic Church throughout the region, which includes 6.500 grassroots communities, 143 parish leaders with their assistants, and 7 diocesan leaders; there are so many people who can personally monitor the situation and report any disturbing developments.

### Collaboration and training

The technical training of those concerned and an efficient registration system are of crucial importance here. For each problem, it is asked to fill in a form with the following information: the type of problem (natural phenomenon, armed attack, epidemic, population displacement, sexual violence, theft or destruction...), the number of victims, consequences, and accessibility of the area where the problem occurred. Such information shall be communicated as soon as possible to (local) authorities, UNICEF, NGOs, or other humanitarian organizations, depending on the nature of the problem.

Each month, the regions provide an overview. This overview also mentions the action taken by Caritas or others, as well as the evolution of the situation. So we can map out certain trends and we can work with all those involved to improve aid and prevention. The recorded data allows all interested to see what works and does a good job in a specific context. In this way, we can also convince local authorities and NGOs to tackle certain problems together and manage the funding, so that the funds can be used effectively.

### Extract from the Register of Emergencies Lisala December 2016

On Sunday 15/12/2016 at 5 pm, the city of Lisala was hit by strong winds. The episode lasted only ten minutes, but houses, as well as primary and secondary schools, were destroyed. Lightning killed one person. The roof of some schools was completely destroyed. 2.172 students are the victims. Some have changed schools, some of them only go to school from time to time and others stay at home. The provincial government provided sheet metal to repair the roofs. People who can no longer live at home have been accommodated in host families.

Identification of victims and assessment of damage: Caritas Lisala.

Distribution of sheet metal for damaged roofs: provincial government.



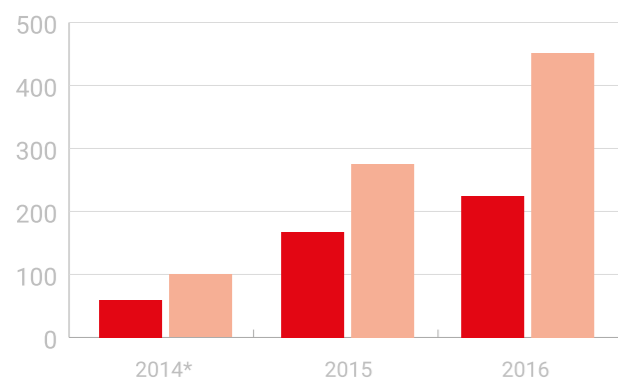
## 5 Belgium: resettlement

Resettlement involves transferring refugees from a country where they have sought protection to a third country where they will receive a permanent right of residence. This measure proposes a solution to those who cannot return to their country of origin as well as to those who cannot benefit from protection or prospects of integration in the first host country.



Since 2009, Belgium has regularly implemented resettlement operations, in collaboration with UNHCR, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the European Union. As a complement to its asylum policy, it therefore organizes the transfer of a number of refugees in order to offer them protection, to give them the right to reside in its territory, and to integrate them into society.

In 2016, the Belgian government pledged to resettle 550 people, 450 Syrians and 100 Congolese. In the same year, a total of 452 persons arrived in Belgium, 448 Syrians and 4 Congolese.

Caritas International has accompanied 224 of these people in their first steps towards integration in Belgium. A total of 390 people in the resettlement program are accompanied by our services.



\*The arrivals have only officially begun in 2015, but several people assisted by Caritas had already arrived in 2013.

 Assisted by Caritas  
 Arriving in Belgium

*"We organize for these people a quality accompaniment for a maximum of 24 months. Through our cultural mediators, we create bridges, work the local anchoring and integration into the community where they are hosted, and organize collective information and exchange sessions. Of course, many of them suffer trauma or are denied family reunification and suffer from not seeing their families."*

Elisabeth Verniers, coordinator of the project.

In 2016, the government changed the system of reception for these people: "Before, they were welcomed for 1 year in housing made available by a CPAS and received financial assistance," explains Elisabeth Verniers, "today, the reception is only for a maximum of 6 months, and in a local hosting initiative (ILA), within the framework of a material aid scheme. Working for people's autonomy has become more complicated. We also encounter other problems such as the lack of psychological support, the waiting time before starting the language courses, etc."



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## 6 Transition to autonomy for vulnerable refugees


The "Vulnerable Transit" project started in March 2016. It targets persons leaving the reception network for asylum seekers and having obtained the go-ahead on their stay in Belgium, but for those the transition towards autonomy risks many problems due to a particular vulnerability: disability, medical problem, psychological fragility, pregnant or newborn woman, elderly, large families, lone parents, illiterate people, etc.

The objective is to maximize the chances of a successful transition to self-sufficiency by offering accommodation in individual dwellings (in Brussels, Liege, and Antwerp), and this for a period of 3 to 6 months with a social accompaniment adapted by an "integration" coach and a specific support with the search for a definitive housing on the private market.

The project has 160 spaces in 40 units.

In 2016, 31 families, or 89 people, were accommodated.

"For 23 of the 31 families, the vulnerabilities are multiple," says Ariane Dewandre, responsible for the project. "It is all the more that this combination of problems that makes them vulnerable." The initial results of the project are encouraging. Ariane Dewandre: "In 2016, we were able to accompany 100% of these families towards permanent housing." But there are difficulties: "On average, the length of stay in our transit accommodation is 3.4 months, which is very short. Indeed, our aim is to carry out substantive work to prepare for autonomy - capacity building in financial management, housing management, administrative management, building a network around the person, etc. - and all this requires time. We see that the management of immediate needs such as enrollment in school and psychological or medical support depending on the needs of the person and housing research leave us little time for genuine preparation for autonomy."

 **Zahra, a native of Iraq.**

She fled with her 4 children and is now accompanied by Caritas as part of the Transition to Autonomy project: "Along the way, I was afraid of losing the children. Arriving at the Turkish coast, we had to walk more than an hour to get to the sea. Other Iraqis helped me with the children. Once we got to the boat - a small inflatable boat - the ferrymen told me there was no room for my son. I yelled, screamed so they would not separate us. I was beside myself. My son carried a backpack. They grabbed it and threw it away. Without the bag, he was able to climb. We finally stayed together. I remember that on the beach there were a lot of bags and abandoned clothes."



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## 7 Belgium: transition towards autonomy, specific project for vulnerable minors

Caritas has also set up two projects to support the autonomy of Non-Accompanied Foreign Minors (MENA), which have obtained a statute, one in Brussels (since July 2015) and the second in Liège (since June 2016).

The objectives of the Youth in Transit project are:

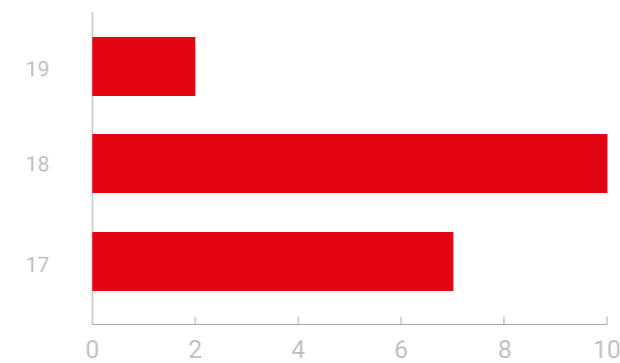
- The development and autonomy of the young person and the strengthening of his / her capacity to lead an independent life,
- Facilitate the transition from material aid (in reception centers for asylum seekers) to financial assistance from the CPAS and the opening up of social rights,
- To equip young people so that they can integrate in Belgium.

To achieve these objectives, we install these young people in apartments that can accommodate two or even three young people or in individual studios. Various educators and social workers supervise these young people.

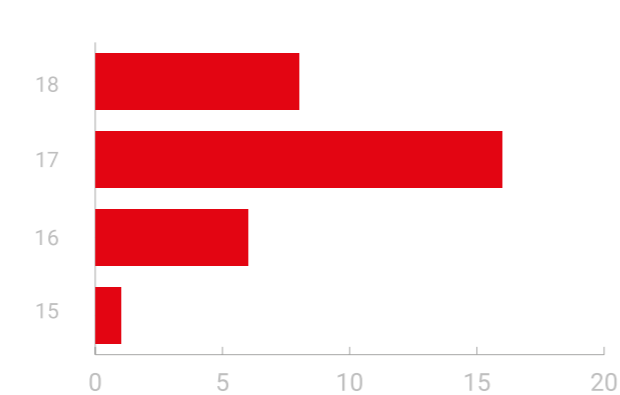
"Our target audience is young people between the ages of 16 and 18 who have obtained status or have a high probability of recognition and will therefore surely obtain status. The goal is to support their transition to independent living. The young people of our project live in apartments, in shared apartments. In total, we have 40 places in 3 districts of Liège. For the time being, 31 young people live in our structures. They come from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia, or Syria. They are young people who are often suffering, who have lived things that cannot be imagined. Learning to rebuild with all this is far from simple", comments Catherine Henrotte, project manager in Liège.

In 2016, we welcomed 50 young people: 31 in Liège, all men, and 19 in Brussels, including two young women.

Age of youth in Brussels



Age of youth in Liège



## 8 Integration - focus on housing

In 2016, the integration unit of Caritas International continued its work on housing access, coaching refugees in their initial integration efforts, raising awareness among owners, and supporting the integration of vulnerable public-targets.

The core of the integration work is the three "Housing-Cafés" organized in Liège, Brussels, and Antwerp, with two sessions a week in each city. Access to housing is extremely difficult for a refugee who has just been admitted as a refugee and who has only two months to leave the shelter. The Housing-Café enables refugees to cope with this housing research problem together with the support of professionals and volunteers from Caritas.

### Some key figures

In total, the three Housing-Cafés combined supported 824 people in their search for housing. In about 15% of the cases, Caritas or one of the owners who was in solidarity with its network could find a house. In nearly 38% of the cases, people supported by the Housing-Café found accommodation on their own. "They are motivated by their visit to the Housing-Café or have learned how to look and how to approach an owner, which allows them to continue their research autonomously," comments Sofie De Mot, project manager. In total, 52% of visitors find accommodation.

### Nabil and Fadia

Syrians and parents of two children, they were granted refugee status in Belgium at the end of 2015. "We had two months to leave the reception center for asylum seekers and find accommodation." Finding housing on the rental market, without knowing French, without money. In short, mission impossible. "Caritas International has helped us," says Nabil. "Thanks to Caritas' integration coach, we met Catherine and her husband, our homeowners, and we were able to settle here."



© Karen Nachtergaele

		People equivalent	Housing found via Housing-Cafés				Waiting	Total files
			By Caritas	Via a homeowner	Independent	Total housing found		
Liège	2015	37	1	9	6	16	7	39
	2016	324	24	12	71	107	52	266
Antwerp	2016	137	18	5	43	66	20	152
Brussels	2016	326	6	15	114	135	38	173
		<b>824</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>630</b>



## 9 Voluntary return

During their stay in Belgium, special circumstances lead some migrants or (ex-) asylum seekers to consider returning to their country of origin. To ensure a dignified return, it is necessary to adequately prepare for departure. Voluntary return is becoming increasingly important in Belgian migration policies. Accompaniment in preparation for return is essential. That is why it is crucial for us to take the time to prepare candidates for return, to support them so that they can, among other things, mourn their migration project in Belgium.

In 2016, the front-line social service supported 773 people, or 590 cases of voluntary return. 451 files actually resulted in a departure. Most of the returnees are from Ukraine, Brazil, Georgia, Russia, and Algeria.

### Reintegration after return

For Caritas International, support does not stop at the border. We always focus on post-return reintegration.

In 2016, support for reintegration increased: 551 people (370 cases) returned with support for reintegration. Out of 370, 128 files were transferred to the reintegration cell by the social service.



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2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
426	635	762	430	366	551

"This trend began in October 2015," said Hermien Wittouck, coordinator of the reintegration after return cell. "More people have returned to Iraq and more people have ended their stay in Belgium during the proceedings."

### Conference of partners in Georgia

In 2016, the "reintegration after return" unit organized a conference in Georgia for all actors involved in returning to the Caucasus region, especially our local partners who provide post-return support.

Ine Lietaert, a researcher at the University of Ghent, presented the results of her study on returns to Georgia and Armenia "A multi-sited, longitudinal study on the return processes of Armenian and Georgian migrants." Hermien Wittouck: "Participants also received training on social support and challenges in post-return support. The training was also given in Russian, which was really unique! They are better equipped to work with people who come home and know better how to manage all the difficulties and challenges faced by these people."

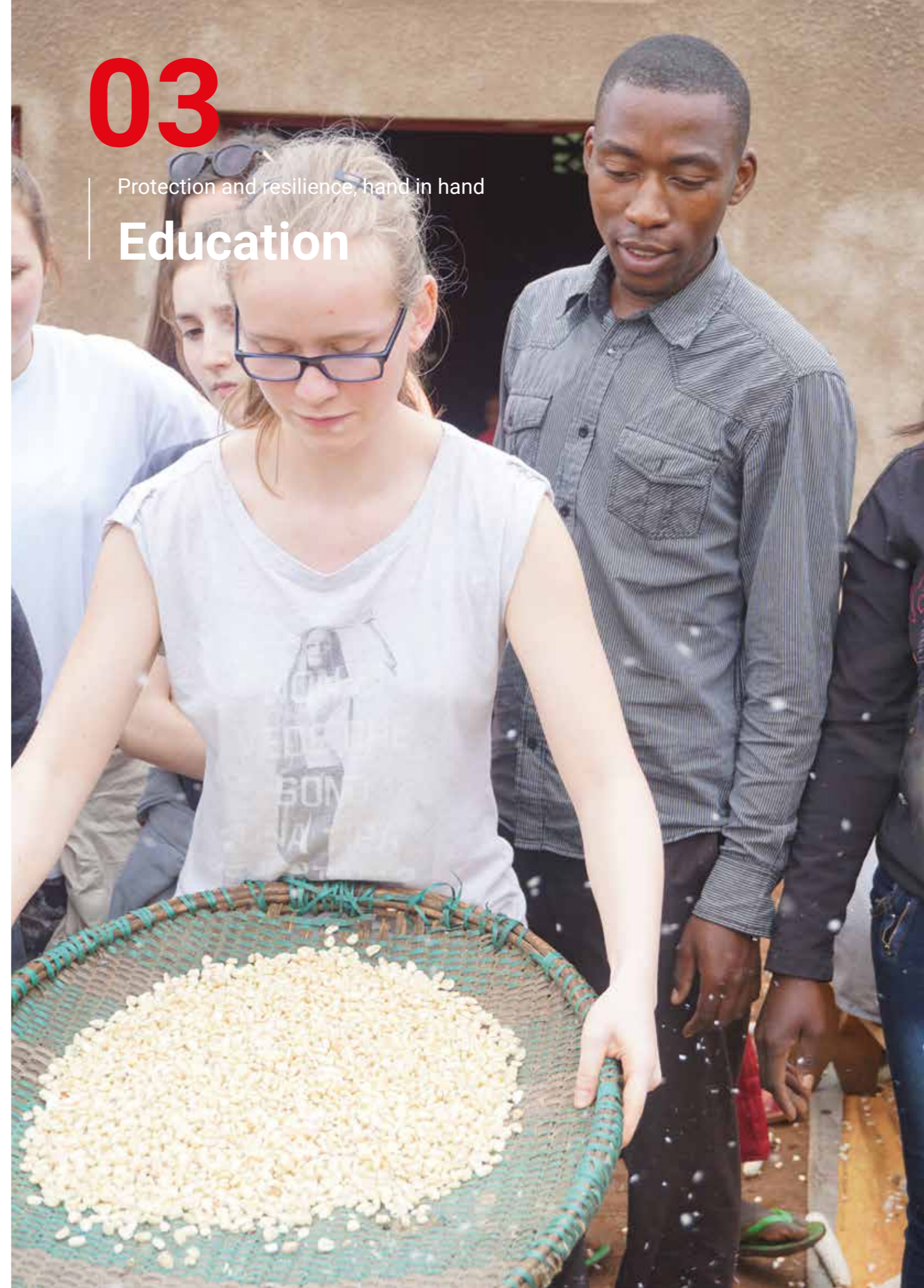
### Echange à Augsburg

The "reintegration after return" unit also set up a second exchange, organized in Augsburg with European partners and partners from the countries of origin. The goal? Train these partners in the preparation and accompaniment of the increasingly vulnerable.

# 03

Protection and resilience, hand in hand

## Education





## First-time immigrants in our society: a journey of discovery with young people

More and more children with a past of exile are gradually directed towards the regular classes. But are our students prepared? Can they slip into the skin of these children? Are they open to 'others'? Do they have a critical look at information in the media about our multicultural society?

Caritas International prepares students through its varied educational offerings. We inform and engage young people around the theme 'asylum seekers, refugees and migrants' through workshops, teaching materials and actions. We support the teaching teams by offering coaching and retraining sessions. Teachers working on this theme can always address their questions or requests for support to Caritas International.

By 2016, Caritas International is expanding its educational offerings with new online materials. In this way, we encourage greater understanding and openness towards asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, in and out of the classroom.

In collaboration with the KU Leuven, Caritas International has developed a pedagogical dossier 'In de kijker' for the Thomas portal of the Faculty of Theology of the KUL: 'Refugees in Belgium: stories behind media messages'. Teachers find not only contextual information, but also many suggestions and audiovisual material to be presented in class. This file is intended for the Catholic religion course, but is equally suitable for a broader approach within the school.



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### Our educational projects

Around migrants, asylum seekers and refugees:

- In-class workshops: 'Between 2 worlds' and others. In 2016, we organized 86 workshops in schools all over Belgium. 2.233 pupils were involved.
- Actions: 'Christmas in exile' - Show your solidarity with Syrian refugee children in Lebanon by writing a letter. 28 schools, or 1.038 pupils, wrote a card or a letter to children of their age in Lebanon. 15 youth movements or 581 youngsters did also participate.
- Didactic materials: 'Christmas in exile'; 'Refugees in Belgium: stories behind media messages'.
- Coaching: intensive support in secondary schools. 12 people were involved.
- Pedagogical materials: 'In de Kijker'. 10 boxes are available in the documentation centers of 'Kleur Bekennen'.
- In-service training: individual training and tailored pedagogical days.

Around international cooperation:

- Didactic materials: 'Umurima', web-documentary on agricultural cooperatives and food security.
- Advocacy trip 'Move with Africa', in collaboration with La Libre Belgique and the students of the Saint-Roch Institute in Theux, Rwanda.

# 04

Protection and resilience, hand in hand

## Advocacy







## Why Advocacy?

Advocacy means weighing the pros and cons, listening and speaking. It is a matter of keeping an eye on what is happening at the political level and the other on what we are seeing on the ground. The effects of political decisions often take time to be felt. Every political declaration and legislative proposal is preceded by several months or even years of work. Ideally, this is done in consultation with civil society, so that we can participate in reflection on how to work together in a better world. But sometimes decisions also fall from heaven and they have direct consequences on what we do or want to do. These consequences are sometimes positive, but sometimes also negative.

Through its advocacy work, Caritas International seeks, for example, to defend the rights of asylum seekers and to ensure that they are respected. But we are also considering, with other NGOs, how we, the civil society organization, can position ourselves in relation to thematic policy documents on subjects that often form the axis of our international cooperation, emergency aid and how, for example, this emergency aid must respect human dignity.

## Publications

In the report "Every life counts: towards a strengthened Belgian humanitarian policy, we have analyzed with other Belgian humanitarian NGOs how the Belgian government has accomplished its humanitarian tasks during the last 5 years. We have also worked very hard on the humanitarian framework, including humanitarian principles in the act. But major issues remain, such as the application of Disaster Risk Reduction or the predictability and flexibility of available resources. While successive ministers often take constructive actions, continuity and predictability have been lacking.

We have also reflected on other issues, such as food security. Thus, in collaboration with other organizations, we published a report on the financial contribution to Belgian family farming in the field of development. In October, on the occasion of World Food Day, with our partners in the Coalition Against Hunger, we organized a round table in the federal parliament in the presence of parliamentarians. The debate focused on the theme of the new Agriculture and Food Security strategic note. With the Coalition, we made recommendations on the role of the private sector and the role of farmers' organizations.



## Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the new Sustainable Development Goals were formulated and adopted by members of the United Nations, including Belgium. These objectives form a sort of ideal that, if realized, will guarantee a more just world. But before we get there, we have a lot of work to do. The objectives provide us with a broader framework to which and in which we can engage as an organization, but also allows us and our partners to challenge our policy makers. In particular, to remind them that they must work towards a coherent policy - a policy that avoids making short-term decisions that can have undesirable consequences in the long term or at a distance. Consider irresponsible exploitation of natural resources or the subsidization of large commercial agricultural projects. Or think about unwarranted investments in development projects whose sole purpose is to curb migration, for example in Ethiopia or Niger - two countries where we have partners who reflect with us on these specific challenges.

## Emergency aid and development: survey of our programs

### Co-financing Programs (equity and institutional funds)

#### Emergency aid and rehabilitation

Country	Title of project	Time frame	Budget	Sponsor	2016 expenditures in euros
DR Congo - Burundi - Niger	Program to Support the Resilience of Populations Vulnerable to Disaster Risk (PRRC)	2016-2018	5.293.689,00	DGD	366.343,19
DR Congo	Monitoring and Humanitarian Response Program	2016	388.000,00 USD	UNICEF	393.930,69
DR Congo	Distribution of 2,000 basic necessities - North and South Ubangui (2 projects)	2016	543.967,00 USD	Pooled Funds (FCH)	512.012,91
South Sudan	Avoiding shortages in South Sudan by supporting the production of semi-commercial food in the Green Belt	2015-2016	859.959,00	Swiss confederation	279.488,37
Syria	Emergency assistance for displaced families hosted by the local population	2015-2016	150.000,00	VAIS	50.100,50
Palestine - Gaza	Medical Services and Protection for Vulnerable Groups - Gaza	2016-2017	1.060.077,00	DGD	400.163,75
<b>Total</b>					<b>2.002.039,41</b>



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## Development

Country	Title of project	Time-frame	Budget	Sponsor	2016 expenditures in euros	Contribution Caritas International
Burundi	Creation of added agricultural value through the pooling of public and private resources	2013-2018	950.000,00	EU	178.249,44	25%
Burundi	Multi-stakeholder program to improve food security in the municipalities of Cendajuru, Gisuru and Kinyinya	2013-2018	1.764.706,00	Belgian fund for food security / CTB / WBI	271.198,00	15%
Burundi	Institutional and operational support to the agricultural sector (Paiosa)		142.725,00	CTB	162.761,31	20.000
Burundi	Institutional and operational support to the agricultural sector (Paiosa)	2016-2019	778.000,00	CTB	104.056,09	
Congo	Synergy II project, second phase of the project to support farmers organizations (Agricongo)	2015-2016	144.000,00	DGD	10.010,20	overhead
Congo Burundi Rwanda Haiti	Rural community development support program	2015-2016	3.346.985,00	DGD/ Caritas Linz	1.560.918,36	20%
Ethiopia	Sustainable agriculture and food security strengthened through integrated rehabilitation support mechanisms	2014-2016	3.300.000,00	EU/SHARE	185.558,41	10%
Ethiopia	Improved access to an adequate supply of clean water for drought-prone small farmers in Dergajen Tabia	2015-2016	74.551,26	Elisabeth - Amélie Fund	24.953,00	10.627
Ethiopia	Strengthening access to drinking water, hygiene, and sanitation practices in two districts of eastern Tigray	2016-2017	52.611,00	Hydrobru	17.435,00	10.627
Niger	Participatory and decentralized food security project in the department of Dakoro	2014-2016	1.885.455,41	FBSA	516.783,64	15%
Palestine	Strengthening the local economy in the territories of East Jenin	2014-2016	251.559,87	DGD	65.075,00	20%
Palestine	Home Renovation	2015	52.160,00	Abbé Pierre foundation	14.599,19	20%
<b>Total</b>					<b>3.111.597,64</b>	

## Equity Programs

### Emergency programs with the Caritas network

Country	Crisis	2016 expenditures in euros
Burundi	Humanitarian Crisis	10.000,00
Central African Republic	Humanitarian Crisis	47.500,00
Chad	Humanitarian Crisis	20.000,00
Ethiopia	Drought	50.000,00
Haiti	Hurricane Matthew	231.100,00
India	Flooding (Bihar region)	25.000,00
Iraq	Humanitarian Crisis	250.000,00
Lebanon	Humanitarian Crisis (Syrian Refugees)	119.660,00
Madagascar	Drought	10.000,00
Myanmar	Humanitarian Crisis	10.000,00
Nepal	Rehabilitation following the earthquake	400.000,00
Nepal	Floods	25.000,00
Niger	Crisis in Diffa	42.500,00
Philippines	Rehabilitation after typhoon Yolanda	844.407,00
Russia	Humanitarian Crisis (Ukrainian refugees)	15.000,00
Rwanda	Humanitarian Crisis (Refugees from Burundi)	37.500,00
Serbia	Humanitarian Crisis (Middle-Eastern refugees)	20.000,00
Sierra Leone	Post-Ebola Crisis	40.000,00
South Sudan	Humanitarian Crisis	25.000,00
Syria	Humanitarian Crisis (displaced people in coastal areas)	140.150,00
Tanzania	Humanitarian Crisis (Burundian refugees)	20.000,00
<b>Total</b>		<b>2.382.817,00</b>



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### Socio-economic projects

Country	Number	2016 expenditures in euros
Bosnia	1	10.000,00
Cambodia	1	15.984,00
DR Congo	18	135.085,49
Ethiopia	1	47.030,00
Haiti	1	53.800,00
Indonesia	1	10.000,00
Kosovo	1	11.130,00
Palestine	2	15.000,00
Thailande	1	15.000,00
Uganda	3	39.895,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>352.924,49</b>

### Capacity building: Caritas partners

Country	Organization	2016 expenditures in euros
Bosnia Herzegovina	Caritas Bosnia Herzegovina (CDF)	25.000,00
Burundi	Caritas Burundi + Caritas Ruyigi	15.000,00
Central African Republic	Caritas Central Africa	1.020,00
DR Congo	Caritas (12 dioceses)	59.966,00
Ethiopia	Caritas Ethiopia	60.000,00
Lebanon	Caritas Mona	10.000,00
Montenegro	Caritas Montenegro (CDF)	5.000,00
Niger	Caritas Niger + Caritas Maradi + Working Group Sahel	28.000,00
<b>Total</b>		<b>203.986,00</b>

### Partnership programs

Country	Number of projects	2016 expenditures in euros
Armenia	1	1.728,44
Benin	2	7.868,44
Brazil	1	1.065,00
Burkina Faso	1	10.332,12
Burundi	1	5.000,00
Cambodia	1	1.852,50
Cameroon	1	20.595,30
Democratic Republic of the Congo	5	59.195,23
Ethiopia	1	13.500,00
Haiti	3	65.753,33
India	3	16.797,45
Lebanon	2	30.398,55
Mali	3	55.452,39
Nepal	1	1.057,62
Niger	1	22.728,44
Nigeria	1	1.600,00
Phillipines	2	7.949,88
Rwanda	4	18.800,26
Senegal	1	3.869,43
South Africa	3	30.124,54
Syria	1	9.042,00
Tanzania	1	9.475,22
Togo	2	30.476,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>424.662,14</b>





# International cooperation



Emergency aid  
Reconstruction



Emergency aid  
Reconstruction  
Development



Development

**Africa**  
Chad  
Madagaskar  
Sierra Leone  
South Sudean

**Asia**  
Myanmar

**Europe**  
Russia  
Serbia

**Middle East**  
Iraq

**Africa**  
Burundi  
Central African Republic  
DR Congo  
Ethiopia  
Niger  
Rwanda  
Tanzania

**Asia**  
India  
Nepal  
Philippines

**Central America**  
Haiti

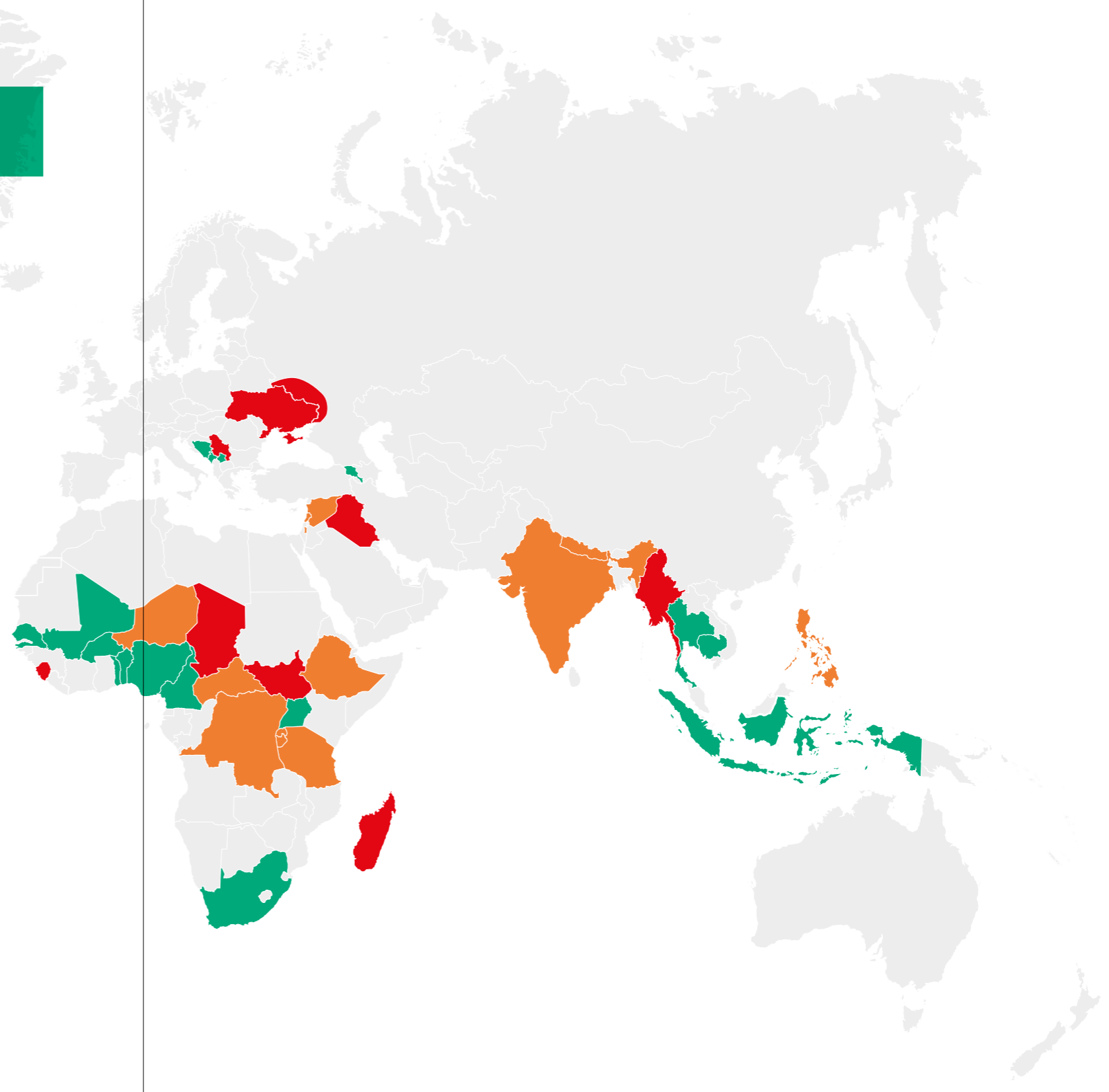
**Middle East**  
Lebanon,  
Palestine  
Syria

**Africa**  
Benin  
Burkina Faso  
Cameroon  
Mali  
Nigeria  
Senegal  
South Africa  
Togo  
Uganda

**Asia**  
Cambodia  
Indonesia  
Thailand

**Europe**  
Armenia  
Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Kosovo  
Montenegro

**Latin America**  
Brazil







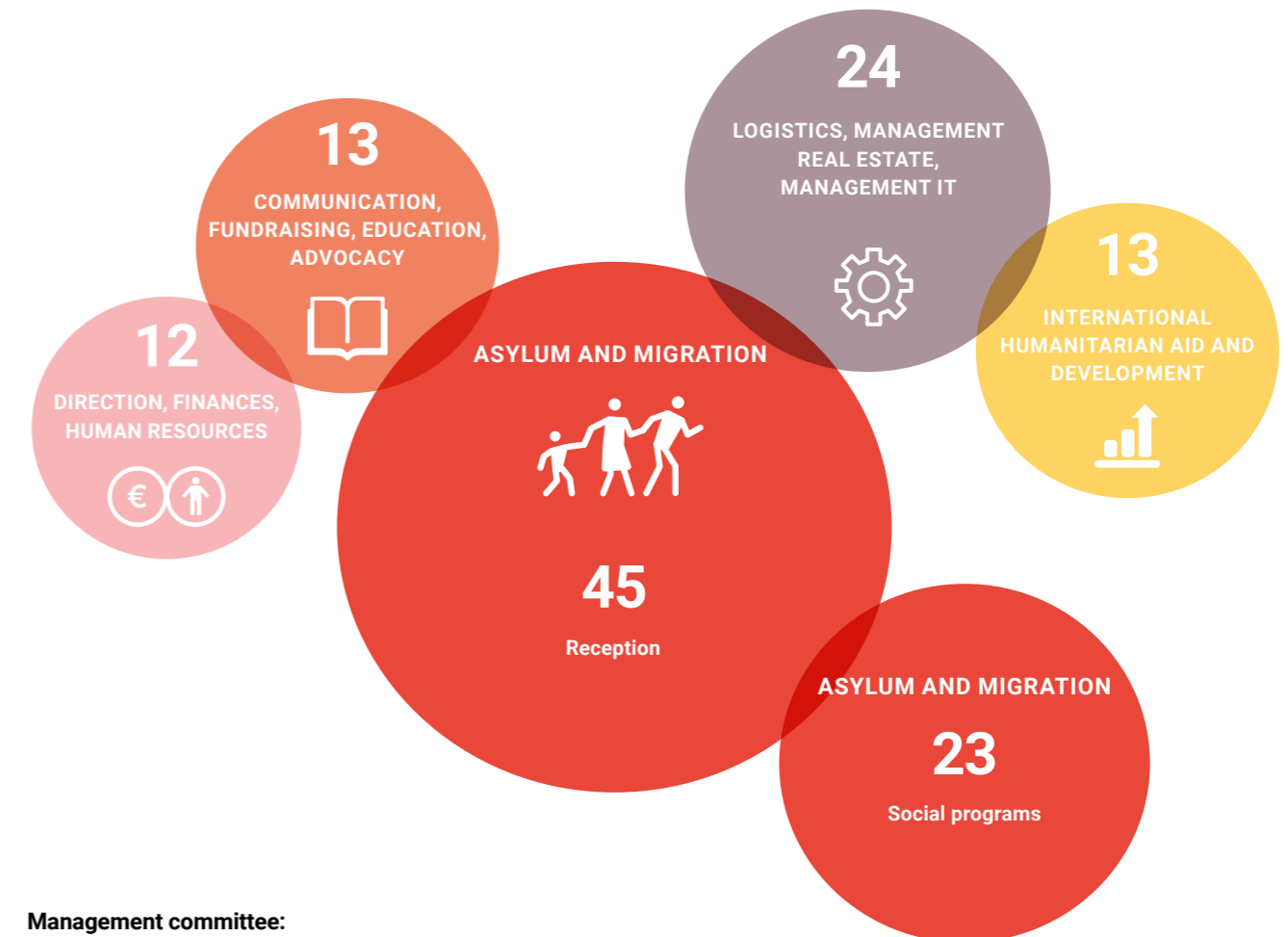
## Asylum and Migration in Belgium: survey of our projects

Title of project	Objectives	Duration	Donor	Costs directly related to the 2016 project
Youth in Transit Liege - Vulnerable minors, a transition towards autonomy	Accompaniment towards life in autonomy, transition from material aid to the financial social assistance of unaccompanied foreign minors.	Since July 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2016	Fedasil	268.590 €
Vulnerable Refugees: Transition to Independence (Adults)	Facilitate the transition to self-reliance and life in Belgium for vulnerable refugees who have obtained a residence permit.	Since March 2016	Fedasil	510.835 €
Integration - namely: Housing-café projects in Liege, Brussels, Antwerp and integration of vulnerable refugees.	Facilitate access for first-time refugees to the private market. Housing-café are organized in Lieges, Brussels, and Antwerp. The coaching project aims to facilitate the integration of admitted refugees.	Housing cafes since November 2015	Equity, Province of Flemish Brabant, Walloon Region, and Funds Roi Baudouin	433.246 €
Individual reception of asylum seekers - via Convention Ciré (including Louvranges)	Reception of asylum seekers in individual dwellings in Brussels and Wallonia and specific welcome for women and isolated mothers.	Expertise since 1999.	Fedasil	3.970.584 €
Individual reception of asylum seekers - via Convention Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen	Reception of asylum seekers in individual dwellings in Brussels and Flanders.	Expertise since 1999.	Fedasil	3.756.179 €
Scherpenheuvel Reception Center	Reception of asylum seekers in a collective center - maximum capacity: 174 places of reception.	From November 2015 to June 2016	Fedasil	2.794.272 €
Spa Reception Center	Reception of asylum seekers in a collective center - maximum capacity: 70 places of reception.	From November 2015 to June 2016	Fedasil	863.627 €
Individual Emergency Project in Ostend	Accueil de famille demandeuses d'asile en logement individuel à Oostende	January to December 2016	Fedasil	489.411 €
APL Charleroi	Sub-letting to admitted refugees in the Charleroi region	Since January 2014	Equity	53.208 €
Reintegration after voluntary return	Accompanying persons wishing to return voluntarily to their country of origin and who are entitled to reintegration support.	Programme démarré en 2006	Fedasil, AMIF	1.622.423 €
Social service for foreign students and trainees	Supports students in Belgium who hold a visa limited to studies and enrolled in a university or a high school. In privileged partnership with CAP Brabantia.		Equity	42.285 €
Resettlement	Resettlement involves transferring refugees from a country where they have sought protection to a third country where they will receive a permanent right of residence.	2009 – 2017	Fedasil	219.088 €

## Personnel and organization

Some figures on our employees in Belgium – 31-12-2016

Breakdown of 129 employees by responsibility



### Management committee:

- François Cornet
- Anne Dussart
- Patrick Debucquois
- Gilles Cnockaert
- Florence Lobert
- Hubert Thienpont
- Kristin Vanoveren
- Bernadette Van Raemdonck





In	Out	Number 01/01/2016	Number 31/12/2016
60	32	101	129

#### Breakdown of 129 employees by age group

Age	Men	Women	Total
20-29	9	23	32
30-39	12	31	43
40-49	11	8	19
50-59	12	19	31
60-61	1	3	4

#### Breakdown of 129 employees by gender

45 Men	84 Women
--------	----------

#### And also:

- 12 partners (4 women and 8 men) in Burundi (2), DR Congo (2), Thailand (2), Ethiopia (2), the Balkans, Niger, South Sudan and Haiti.
- More than 150 volunteers participated in a warm welcome of asylum seekers and accompaniment of refugees in their integration processes.
- The social elections brought a lot of work. The six terms were filled.
- In collaboration with the union delegates, we worked on the revision of the working regulations. The settlement will be finalized in 2017.
- Management staff have received training in burnout prevention.
- Through a prevention campaign around the on-screen work, aimed at all employees, we try to prevent physical problems.
- Within the framework of quality management and in order to improve the interaction between the different departments, we have launched five interdepartmental working groups: Processes, Human Resources, Partnerships, Internal Communication and Strategy.
- The entrance hall and our large meeting room have undergone a cure of youth in order to offer a more pleasant and fluid reception, as well as a meeting space adapted to the existing needs.
- An electronic badge system offers better protection of personnel and prevention of theft.

## Financial Report 2016 \*

The year 2016 ended with a balanced result after allocation to the designated funds.

Revenue and expenditure were at a particularly high level this year.

### Revenue

Revenue was 36.374.540 € this year. This revenue increased compared with previous financial years because of the following factors:

- The crisis in accommodation in 2015 signified an increase in the accommodation capacity for the CIRE [Coordination et Initiatives pour Réfugiés et Etrangers] and Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen agreement, and a new direct agreement with Fedasil [Federal agency for the reception of asylum seekers]. In the first half of 2016, the accommodation capacity for asylum seekers was at a maximum.
- The International Cooperation department took on two new projects with the DGD [Directorate-general for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid]: the programme for reducing the risk of disasters in Niger, Burundi and Congo (PRRC); and the 'medical services and protection' programme in the Gaza Strip in Palestine. These amounts were received at the end of the financial year and constitute a substantial part of the allocation to the designated funds.
- In the 2016 financial year, we changed the way in which legacies are valued: rather than enter the net amounts in the accounts, as in previous financial years, we now enter into the accounts the gross amounts and the estate inheritance charges (inheritance tax, documentary expenses, duo legacies, etc.) separately. This means an increase both from the point of view of the revenue and from the point of view of the charges. Net, the amount is comparable with that for the 2015 financial year.

- Lastly, we recorded the reversal of a substantial provision for major repairs made at the end of 2015. These works have been reclassified as investments and therefore must not be subject to a provision.

### Expenditure

The charges were also particularly high at 32.648.590 €. These charges increased mainly for the same reasons as the increase in revenues, as follows:

- The new agreements for accommodation for asylum seekers meant a considerable increase in the charges.
- The change in the method of accounting for legacies meant that charges and revenues increased by €2.001.983 €.
- Lastly, we recorded an increase in activities relating to voluntary return [to country of origin], to the integration of recognised refugees, to education in and awareness of the subject of migration in schools.

### The Result

The difference between revenue and income comes to 3.725.950 €. This amount must be almost entirely allocated to the designated funds. In fact, it consists of amounts received for projects, that have not yet been spent.

Lastly, the result is close to being balanced and is 1.000€

\* Results as presented by the board of administrators to the general assembly, Juin 2017.





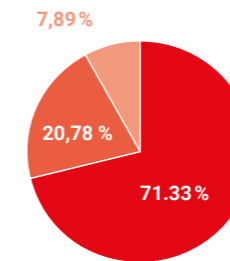
## Results 2016 in euro

Revenue			Expenditure		
		%			%
Donations	4.683.894,73	12,88	Reception of asylum seekers	13.129.291,17	40,21
Legacies	2.873.015,01	7,90	Migrant programs (firstline, guardianship, integration, re-integration)	1.146.459,20	3,51
Wallonie - Bruxelles International (WBI)	108.120,56	0,30	Voluntary return	1.622.422,98	4,97
Provinces, towns	185.000,00	0,51	International cooperation	10.345.635,02	31,69
Multilateral institution	231.167,42	0,64	Communication and fundraising	1.361.068,96	4,17
Fonds belge pour la sécurité alimentaire	1.059.692,06	2,91	• Education	180.700,72	
Belgian government - DGD	6.721.442,86	18,48	• Fundraising	244.286,93	
Ministry of Justice - Ministry of the Interior	449.430,25	1,24	• Advocacy	66.889,11	
Belgian government - DGD	7.165.483,75	19,70	• External communicatio	869.192,20	
Coordination et Initiatives pour Réfugiés et Etrangers	4.270.500,23	11,74	Operating costs	5.043.713,07	15,45
European Union	364.380,69	1,00	• General operating costs	3.041.730,14	
Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen	5.140.661,38	14,13	• Inheritance taxes	2.001.982,93	
Foundations, other Caritas organizations...	942.253,71	2,59	<b>Total</b>	<b>32.648.590,40</b>	<b>100,00</b>
Subsidies for employment (Actiris, Maribel...)	254.703,54	0,70			
Other operating revenue	938.491,55	2,58			
Financial products	242.050,64	0,67			
Exceptionnel products	744.251,91	2,05			
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.374.540,29</b>	<b>100,00</b>			

## Appropriation of the results

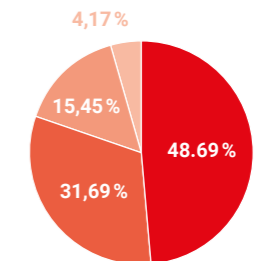
Difference between revenue and expenditure	3.725.949,89
Increase (-) / Decrease (+) designated funds	-3.724.949,91
<b>Results of the exercise</b>	<b>999,97</b>

## Revenu 2016



Public financing	€ 25.950.582,74
Private gifts	€ 7.556.909,74
Other	€ 2.867.047,81

## Expenditure 2016



Asylum and migration	€ 15.898.173,35
International aid	€ 10.345.635,02
Operating costs	€ 5.043.713,07
Communication, fundraising, education, advocacy	€ 1.361.068,96

## Balance sheet in euros

Assets	2016	Liabilities	2016
Tangible fixed assets	7.475,58	Funds of the organization	2.880.472,41
Intangible fixed assets	4.798.331,93	Social liability	2.288.421,09
Financial fixed assets	3.750,00	Designated funds for defined projects	13.246.536,00
Amounts receivable after one year or more	2.397.055,41	Profit carried forward	721.190,49
Cash investments	5.749.127,83	Capital subsidies	11.271,60
Liquid assets	9.306.061,68	Provisions	984.157,75
Accruals and deferrals	264.272,60	Debts payable after one year or more	2.340.817,79
<b>Total</b>	<b>22.526.075,03</b>	Accruals and deferrals	53.207,90
		<b>Total</b>	<b>22.526.075,03</b>



## Members of the board of administrators

31-12- 2016

Mr. Michel Verhulst, chairman\*  
(till the 5th of April 2017)  
Mr. Dominic Verhoeven, vice-chairman\*

Mr. Frans Cardyn  
MR. Frank De Coninck\*  
(chairman from the 5th of April 2017 onwards)  
Father Philippe de Dorlodot\*  
(vice-chairman, from the 5th of April 2017 onwards)  
Father Luk De Geest  
Madam Martine Jonet-de Bassompierre  
Mr. Michel Kesteman  
Madam Marie-Paule Moreau\*  
Madam Chantal Noël  
Mr. Marc Nuytemans  
Mr. Hubert Sanders  
Mr. Jean-Yves Standaert  
Mr. l'Abbé Giorgio Tesolin

Director: Mr. François Cornet\*  
(\* Members of the management committee)

Honorary chairman: Mr. Pierre Géhot

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Make a donation  
Share your festive joy  
Organize a fundraiser  
Become a volunteer  
Provide housing  
Organize a workshop on asylum and migration  
Think of Caritas International in your will

Our heartfelt thanks!  
[www.caritasinternational.be](http://www.caritasinternational.be)

**Responsible editor**  
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