

▶ The initiative

From 2012 to 2014, the German Caritas has been focusing its public relations and specialized activities on the issue of “solidarity and social cohesion”. Everybody working for one of the many areas of Caritas has been asked to develop and share stimuli for more solidarity.

One special topic is focused upon each year:

- 2012–Health care system based on solidarity
- 2013–Solidarity with families
- 2014–International solidarity true to the motto:

Far away is closer than you might think!

Caritas wants to draw attention to global interdependencies by showing the impact of our actions on other societies and people. Topics that arise in this context are: caregivers from abroad, the consumption of resources, and the climate change, to name only a few.



Caritas promotes social cohesion.

- Personal contacts and the opportunity to network are encouraged. This fosters the attitude: “We belong together!”
- A great variety of possibilities invite people to volunteer.
- The cooperation between Caritas, the parishes, and other partners supports everybody who wants to help.
- The lobbying of social policy matters takes a stand for the disadvantaged whether they live in Germany or across the globe.

▶ Show solidarity!

Get involved in the cohesion of our society!

You do not want to lament about social injustices any longer but get active in showing solidarity? The Caritas Association or the branch of your local Caritas will be happy to welcome you and discuss with you all the areas of getting involved that will suit you.

In case you lack the time for any voluntary commitment we appreciate your financial support that will help all of Caritas’ endeavours towards international solidarity.

Deutscher Caritasverband–Caritas international

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 Initiative for solidarity
and social cohesion



See a Need and Act on It.
C a r i t a s



▶ Solidarity is ...

■ Solidarity strengthens social peace.

Only a society that is willing to equally support all of its members remains open and worth living in.

■ Everybody is part of it.

Showing solidarity means taking care that nobody is left behind—especially in those cases where people are disadvantaged, ill or constrained by a disability.

■ Everybody must be enabled to seize his/her own, self-determined opportunities.

This vision of a free development of the individual is still faced with such disadvantages as being of migrant origin or suffering from poverty. The inclusion of each and everybody strengthens social solidarity.



■ Solidarity means giving competence to people.

When people lead self-sustained lives it is only in an emergency that the supporting society will need to help one of its members. Fair educational opportunities enable everybody to take responsibility tomorrow.

■ Solidarity connects generations.

The demographic change requires a fair balance between the young and the old. This includes preserving our social security systems for the future.

▶ ... what keeps us together

■ Solidarity means that people participate.

It is crucial to get involved, appreciate one's neighbours, visit council meetings, exercise political pressure when necessary, and vote—in public or over the internet.

■ Solidarity does not come by itself.

It is in the family, the neighbourhood, in the parish or at the workplace that people help each other directly. This instructs them to act with solidarity to others. Local infrastructures have to support this process.

■ Solidarity overcomes borders.

People give to charity or donate when they hear about emergencies at home or in other countries. We can learn from people who—despite their own difficult circumstances—show solidarity with others.



Solidarity [sɑ:lə'derətʃ i] (pl. solidarities):
from Latin *solidum*, neuter of *solidus* ("solid").

People showing solidarity stand united on solid ground that gives support to one and all. Our society will prosper on this solid ground and live in peaceful togetherness and a fair balance of interests: all for one and one for all!

▶ ... for example:

■ Things happen when the church goes downtown.

Together, parishes and charitable institutions encourage solidarity in town districts—especially in those where the circumstances are difficult.

■ Change of perspective.

For a certain time, people from secure social backgrounds visit or accompany those who are poor, depend on care or have no home. Thus they learn how important it is to show solidarity.

■ Holistic approach for development strategies.

In their development and aid projects, Caritas international always pays great attention to fostering the local communities.



■ The voluntary social year.

This is a time in the lives of young people during which they get to know many troubled people and learn to support their causes.

■ Volunteer mentors for families.

These people guide and relieve young and stressed-out families.

More: www.solidaritaetsinitiative.de