



No Democracy without Inclusion

During the three years from 2009 to 2011, Caritas is focusing on self-determined inclusion. With this initiative, Caritas wants to contribute effectively to giving everybody the chance to lead an emancipated life within our democratic civil society. The principle of self-determined inclusion is based on our fundamental Christian values of dignity and equity.

This initiative of Caritas to draw the attention to inclusion blends in with the European Year 2010 for combating poverty and social exclusion. In addition, Caritas offers further approaches for solving these problems.

Inclusion Means

- taking into account the individual situation of a person
- creating surroundings that make inclusion possible
- integrating the abilities and resources of persons affected
- enabling a person to lead a self-determined life
- taking participation and active involvement serious
- showing solidarity towards vulnerable members of our society
- reduce social, cultural, and economic barriers

Become a Partner

Support Caritas in its Initiative for Self-Determined Inclusion!

Your local Caritas organisation or an institution of Caritas in your area is looking forward to your interest and involvement. More information and contacts are available at our office in Brussels:

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Would you like further information?
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The Initiative of Caritas
for Self-Determined Inclusion



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





The Absence of Inclusion

■ Poverty Limits Inclusion

Poverty not only limits the access to material goods but also to education and culture. Over the past years, it has turned into an inherent part of German society and has increased the social exclusion of the poor. 87 percent of the people living in Germany only know about poverty through the media and daily street scene.

■ Old Age Limits Inclusion

Advanced age entails limitations in mobility and social environment. In case nursing care is required, a profound feeling of losing one's own self-determination arises. Enabling self-controlled inclusion is a challenge to society. Old age is more than just a burden. We need the wisdom and the real life experience of the elderly.

■ Disabilities Limit Inclusion

According to the UN convention, nobody is to be excluded from public life due to his or her disability. However, this has not yet been fully implemented into everyday life. All too often, people are defined by their disabilities thus reducing the wealth of their resources and possibilities of inclusion.

Initiating Inclusion through Action

Self-Determined Inclusion Requires

- laws that expand the options of the individual
- structures that are open and flexible
- people committed to making inclusion a success

We as Caritas Will

- have our say in matters of welfare policy
- implement self-determined inclusion as a distinction of our work
- support our own institutions in increasing the possibilities of inclusion
- enable inclusion together with local parishes
- strengthen the co-operation with self-help organisations
- increase through our work self-determined inclusion for persons affected
- spread examples of success in order to give new inputs
- develop guides that motivate to become politically active
- get involved in the European Year 2010

Examples of Active Inclusion

- Serving up to 100 guests daily drug addicts have found not only work but also a place to meet at Saarbrückens' 'Café Jedermann' ('Everybody').
- The Caritas volunteer centre of the city of Mönchengladbach assigns volunteer activities to psychologically or physically disabled people.
- People with different backgrounds are living together and supporting each other in the multigenerational home 'Wipperfurth'.
- "We speak for ourselves" is an approach of the 'Aid for the Homeless' in the Ortenau region that turns the homeless from being mere beneficiaries into independent citizens who stand up for their own interests within the organisation, the local municipality and their networks.
- Ole S. gives more than just a little money, he lends an ear to the homeless.
- Tina M. visits the 88 year old Mrs H. every week. Their conversations bring back memories that are fascinating for both of them.
- As a member of the local council, Maria B. advocates the social and cultural inclusion of all citizens.
- In his company, Jörn W. provides employment for the handicapped.
- Martina R. assists young people in finding apprenticeships.