

**Question for written answer E-004676/2014/rev.1
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Caritas report on poverty in Europe

The NGO Caritas Europa recently published an influential study entitled 'Crisis Monitoring Report 2014. The European Crisis and its Human Cost'. This report provides a large amount of information on the impact that the crisis is having on the most vulnerable groups in the European Union Member States with deficit problems.

The report provides an excellent compilation of statistics on poverty in each Member State and draws soundly based conclusions on the impact of the measures taken in response to the crisis. Its analysis of the situation in Spain reveals fundamental aspects of the impact of the crisis, and of the economic policy measures that have been implemented following the exact recommendations issued by the Commission.

The most striking figures contained in the section on Spain concern the child poverty rate, which is the second highest in the EU, with 29.9% of children under 18 below the poverty threshold, a rate exceeded only by Romania. Other figures indicate a rise in serious social problems such as alcoholism, and even a rising number of suicides. The report points out that the impact of austerity measures, and the rise in indirect taxes such as VAT, cuts to basic services such as health and education, guarantees for the banking sector etc., have added to the effect that the crisis is having on the most vulnerable groups.

Is the Commission aware of this report?

What is its opinion on the results set out in the report as regards the impact of the measures recommended by the Commission to the Member States studied?

Will it withdraw any of its recommendations to the Member States studied now that it has better information on the real social impact of these measures?

Will it include the information compiled by the Caritas report when it draws up the next recommendations to the Member States?