

Nearly 12 Million Living in Poverty in Spain



Madrid, October 29 (RHC)-- A leading Catholic charity organization has said in a report that one in four people in Spain are living in poverty. According to the report by Caritas on Tuesday, the number of poor Spaniards has risen by 4.4 million since the country was hit by economic crisis in 2008.

The charity further reported that the number of people in poverty has now reached 11.7 million, or one in four, of which 77 percent are jobless and 61 percent are struggling to have a place to live.

The report also noted that 25.1 percent of Spaniards lived in social exclusion in mid-2013. Spain, with a population of roughly 46,507,760, is grappling with a 23.7-percent unemployment rate. Coming out of a six-year slump in 2014, Spain seeks to lower its deficit to 5.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) at year-end. The country is also trying to reduce its public shortfall to within an EU limit of 3.0 percent of GDP by 2016.

"Economic growth on its own does not lead to equality," Caritas Secretary General Sebastian Mora said, adding: "What is clear is that to fight poverty and social exclusion, you need to boost social protection. It is true that there have been programs and plans... but these efforts are absolutely insufficient."

The report added that some half a million families in Spain do not have a source of income. Caritas also suggested that Spain's economic crisis has also adversely affected immigrants, especially those who are

from outside the European Union.

The government of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has increased taxes, frozen public salaries and limited spending on services such as education and healthcare.

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