



**Doc. 11782**

17 December 2008

## Investing in family cohesion as a development factor in times of crisis

### **Motion for a resolution**

tabled by Mr Luca VOLONTÈ and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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Article 16 of the Universal Declaration on human rights, as adopted by the United Nations on 10 December 1948, defines family as the fundamental core of the society and the State and, as such, it must be recognized and protected.

Under a widespread sociological definition, today family is to be considered as a fully reciprocal relationship among sexes and generations.

It represents the first fundamental core of the community and it guarantees the protection, education and development of individuals as active members of the society in which they live and act.

All sectors of community life (transportation, employment, education, social services, etc.) finds in the family its point of reference and its partner in the implementation of the measures adopted: the family is not just simply one more sector where intervention is needed.

Confronted with the current difficulties stemming from the financial crisis that is affecting European economies, new economic burdens are put on the shoulders of households, these go along with the difficulties in organizing everyday life, an uncertain future and the existing social tensions.

Several studies made in a number of European countries have recently highlighted how the individual-centred welfare policies carried out over the last few decades have turned out to be inadequate, in the long run, to ensure economic development, expense savings and social cohesion at the same time.

Any attempt to improve the system of the welfare state will succeed provided that the welfare state itself focuses on and safeguards family first.

To limit oneself to acknowledging that family is the basis for the demographic growth and the development of generations (grandparents, parents, and children) or that it has a role to support and reallocate resources will not be sufficient; the pre-requisite for any initiative on family policy should be to reaffirm and safeguard the primacy of the individual.

As the promotion of social cohesion in Europe is one of the priorities of this organisation, the Council of Europe should express its point of view in this respect, in order to make its contribution to a general redesign of welfare systems and propose some examples of good practices for the European welfare (from the welfare



state to welfare society): e.g. underlining the central role of families, also in compliance with the subsidiarity principle, and enhancing their role as social capital, so that the social and economic policies of European governments can be centred on such valuable and essential element.

*Signed (see overleaf)*

*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

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1. EDG: European Democrat Group  
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
SOC: Socialist Group