



**Doc. 12146**

27 January 2010

## Demographic winter and the future of Europe

### 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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Europe's demographic winter has led to a decline of two million in the number of births registered in a single year for the 27 EU member states alone. The Assembly must be more incisive with regard to countries that are slow to take energetic measures to combat the very low birth rate and that, for example, pursue tax policies which heavily penalise families with many children.

The falling birth rate in Council of Europe member states poses a significant risk for the continent as a whole from both a social and an economic standpoint. Social security systems will have to be completely reformed and will become unsustainable if the dichotomy of the fall in the birth rate (by about 50% over the last fifty years) and growing life expectancy in many countries continues.

This will exacerbate the consequences of the current economic crisis throughout the continent to the point of foreshadowing a genuine economic collapse.

The key condition for economic recovery is a return to a positive demographic balance. It is therefore absolutely essential to reintroduce family friendly policies constituting a positive response to young Europeans' desire to have children.

At the same time, as is already the case in some Council of Europe member states, tangible, full application of the principle of equality of opportunity in the tax policy sphere is vital.

Among the good practices mention can certainly be made of those that consist in developing social services for working women, parental leave for both fathers and mothers and graduated tax reductions for families according to their number of not yet adult children.

It is consequently necessary to discuss all measures likely to raise awareness of this situation within the member states' institutions so as to ensure that effective policy decisions are taken and the social and economic conditions necessary for Europe's future development are fully guaranteed.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



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

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