

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EUROPEAN PRO-FAMILY POLICY

European
Parliament Election
on 13 June 2004

The Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE) questionnaire gives candidates for the European Parliament an opportunity to declare their intention to exert a pro-family policy in the European Parliament.

The test questions aim to help European families decide how to vote in the European Parliament election.

The Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE) is an alliance of family organisations of diverse European countries aiming to build up a supranational structure, able to better protect the interests of families at the European level. FAFCE represents through its members about 11 million families.

The families represent the largest single group of electors. It includes those who will decide the election. The families are aware of their social and civil roles, as they are body cells of each and every society deserving to take the first and most important position, where solidarity and social esprit de corps are the milestones. Families are a great and irreplaceable power of the national states, thus awaiting significant improvements in the field of their lives.

FAMILIES IN EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL LEGISLATIVES

FAFCE regards creating basic conditions for ample job opportunities as a very urgent task for the European Union. In view of the high rate of unemployment in nearly all

member states, which particularly impacts on families, the extra mile needs to be gone to create of new concepts leading to supplementary employment opportunities. It is within the competency of the EU to help the member states create basic social and entrepreneurial conditions, enabling mothers and fathers to decide equally and independently about sharing in family life and earning a livelihood. The principal of coequality and equivalence of the work within a job and in a household is to be altered for fathers and mothers by means of liberal voting.

► *Question: Will you push for the unification of job and household work through the European Parliament in order to contribute to social coequality of men and women in the member countries? Would you like to get the existing legislation in the field of employment as to the unification of job and household work reappraised?*

FAMILIES AND ECONOMY

Families in Europe know, they are the central target group for consumer goods within the economy. FAFCE therefore represents the largest group of consumers in Europe. Families are important factors of the economy, so treatment of subsisting resources requires a permanent and responsible approach. The European Union after all is progressively developing from the former intention of a European economical community to a Europe of citizens. Therefore, the entire negotiations within the EU have to be focused above all on citizens, with due responsibility for next generations.

► *Question: Will you assess economic and political decisions of the European Parliament in the light of the impact on families an outlook for the future generations?*

FAMILIES, IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM POLICY

The upbringing of children to be tolerant and live together with others is a basic task of the family. In the unifying Europe, loosening frontiers and enabling mobility of people, an understanding of other social and cultural worlds of life becomes more and more important. Protection and support of matrimony and family are the basic rights to be maintained for everybody without regard to a nationality and religion. Foreign citizens have the right to plan the lives of their own, of their partners and children. The EU has to assist the member states with immigration arrangements, so that immigrant couples and families are enabled to live together, to bring up children and to give them freedom to choose where to live. Any separation of families caused by legislative gaps due to failure of immigration policy are to be prevented. The immigration politicians of the member states should harmonize their opinions under those aspects.

► *Question: Would you support immigration and asylum policy of the European Union supporting a coexistence of families?*

FAMILIES AND JURIDICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN MEMBER COUNTRIES

Even the civilized and well-developed culture of Europe shows cases of child abuse, kidnapping or other tragic and noteworthy affairs. Divorces also bring about situations jeopardizing the wellbeing of children and the wellbeing of weaker partners.

FAFCE appeals to the European Union Bodies to collaborate with lawmakers of the member states on this issue.

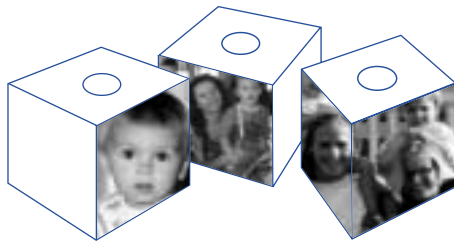
► *Question: Will you propose checking up and reforming the legislation in member states regarding families in the narrow sense of the word to protect wellbeing of the weakest family members?*

FAMILIES AND MEDIA

Mass media are the vehicles of interpersonal communication; mediating information, knowledge and opinion, they are of outstanding importance within the unifying Europe. They help us to acquire knowledge about and to understand other cultures. FAFCE evaluates The performance of European mass media, if it enables citizens to maintain a level of information necessary for verbal communication within a civilized society.

Simultaneously, FAFCE points out handling risks due to one-sidedness or exaggerated confrontation with violence, e.g. how sexual torts cast doubt upon family value and jeopardize development of personalities in case of children. European cooperation, projects and advertisement should be intensified and initiated. Means and staffs should be at the disposal to provide surveillance of media, above all to protect children and juveniles in Europe.

► *Question: Will you strive in the European Parliament for achievement of legislative modifications in the member states in favour of mass media and programs supporting children and the viability of families? Do you consider it a good idea to constitute a mass media authority supervising the suitability for children and families and that this authority may punish offences against the suitability?* >>



FAMILIES AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Globalizing, besides many possibilities and advantages, also brings about demands for a greater responsibility for backward regions in the world.

FAFCE calls upon the European Union to meet those demands of responsibility within its power, as the larger families with numerous children are the most poverty-stricken ones in the backward regions in the world but also in Europe.

► *Question: Will you support a policy of the European Parliament aiming to improve the living conditions, economy, health and education of families in backward countries?*

FAMILIES AND BIOETHICS

The value and dignity of human life require unlimited protection from the very beginning. The possibilities and risks of biotechnology in the sense of inviolability of human life should therefore be considered. Technical and medical means of bioethics and ethical vindication of them have been discussed throughout Europe. Though medical progress and the effects of individual positive therapy are indisputable, they can lead to an "instrumentalizing" of people. The therapeutic and diagnostic possibilities of biotechnology are beyond an appropriate ethical investigation of embryos. **FAFCE** strives for dignity of human life from the very beginning up to a natural end, so people should be given a chance to live a purposeful life, economically motivated. We want to seek the regulation of ethic and legislative conditions in the field of bio and genetic technologies on the European as well as on the international level and we do not want to tolerate everything, that the scientists promote as realizable.

► *Question: Will you, in the European Parliament, support the protection and dignity of human life from the very beginning up to a natural end?*

The Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe

emphatically urges the authorities of the European Union to compile general standards as a minimum bond for the member states in the field of family policy with the integration of non-governmental organisations.



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