



2014 - TWENTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF THE FAMILY

The Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development (DIIFSD),
The International Federation for Family Development (IFFD)
and the Committee of the Regions of the European Union
in cooperation with the
Focal Point on the Family (UNDESA)

European Expert Group Meeting
**“Confronting family poverty and social exclusion;
ensuring work-family balance;
advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity
in Europe”**

Recommendations for relevant stakeholders

European Expert Group Meeting
Brussels
6 – 8 June 2012

Convened as part of the preparations for the
Twentieth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2014

A. Family policy development

1. Enhance and strengthen mainstreaming the family-friendly approach in policy making at all levels considering the impacts of socio-economic policies on families.

2. Develop, promote and implement family-friendly policies aimed at providing sustainable, affordable and quality living conditions for families.
3. Develop, promote and implement policies and practices that provide long-term economic and social security for parents and families.
4. Actively support family-oriented policies aiming at preventing negative family conditions, outcomes and impacts, such as family breakdown.
5. Invest in programmes that coach and support communication within the family and encourage healthy family relationships, in order to prevent violence and family conflicts between couples and parents.
6. Promote the use of a range of tools that improve individual and family capacities in parenting and communications programmes, such as the case-study method. Empower families and recognise their role in social cohesion and economic development, so that they can contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy, in areas such as employment creation and poverty reduction.
7. Invest in research, including enhanced cross national longitudinal data analysis of data sets to improve policy impacts.
8. Promote and fund research on families in transition, including their socio-economic conditions; the impact of divorce and domestic violence on children, relationship quality and quality of life.
9. Conduct evaluations of family policies and practices by all relevant stakeholders.
10. Encourage and promote good practice exchanges in Europe through the European Alliance for Families and other networks.

B. Confronting family poverty and social exclusion

1. Develop, promote and implement policies that recognise that ending child poverty is central to improving child and family well-being and encourage social, economic and educational policies to prevent intergenerational transmission of poverty.
2. Implement programmes to help parents, particularly lone parents, enter the labour market and develop their educational and personal development skills.
3. Promote family-friendly taxation policies and practices, including reduced taxes on goods and services for early childhood products and services.

4. Support specific assistance for families in transition, low income families, lone parent families, large families as well as families with older persons and persons with disabilities.
5. Call on States to address the structural debts, so as to avoid the transfer of structural poverty to future and younger generations.
6. Promote the provision of integrated services for families where a multi-disciplinary team of professionals can work together to offer coordinated services to victims of family violence. Enhance the provision of domestic violence preventative services through developing and promoting a universal code of conduct for reporting all forms of domestic violence, child and elder abuse.

C. Ensuring work-family balance

1. Recognise and communicate the value of work-family balance in the economy and in society.
2. Develop, provide and communicate comprehensive well-resourced and flexible parental leave entitlements throughout the life course of the family and in periods of transition.
3. Support, promote and communicate part-time working arrangements according to parental choice by ensuring non-discriminatory practices towards parents in the labour market. Promote skill development and learning systems throughout the life course of the family and in periods of transition to facilitate parents' re-entering the labour market.
4. Promote, develop and communicate key media messages focusing on the value of children, maternity, paternity and families in our communities and societies.
5. Develop, promote and communicate the economic and social value of family-friendly workplaces in accordance with comprehensive systems of accreditation.
6. Enhance dialogue and partnerships between social policy makers and relevant stakeholders, including families, family associations, business sector, trade unions and employers to develop and improve family-friendly policies and practices in the workplace.

7. Support and promote a stronger, integrated, accessible and supported framework to enhance lone parents' opportunities to balance work and family life and therefore fully engage in education, skill development and job advancement.
8. Recognise and communicate the social, economic and cultural value of family care work.
9. Offer and promote a variety of care practices and opportunities to enable families to make choices (e.g. regarding childcare arrangements), according to their parental responsibilities, needs and values.

D. Advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity

1. Promote 'centres for family well-being' that facilitate quality couple and family relationships, parenting and co-parenting programmes, high-quality childcare and other ancillary services which support families.
2. Promote and develop active measures to support the psychological well-being of children and youth with sensitivity to family situations.
3. Promote school to work transitions and young adults' economic security to facilitate family formation and stability, particularly among those with insecure socio-economic resources.