Presentation of the results of the European project

Vulnerability and the future of families with children in Europe

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United Nations Headquarters - New York

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In the last forty years, society has conducted a vast family experiment, and the outcomes are increasingly coming to light via scientific investigations. The evidence is now clear.

Experiments are not good or bad, they are necessary to make progress

BUT

The only way to take advantage of them is finding the outcomes, analyzing them and acting accordingly.

WITHERSPOON INSTITUTE.
Less support weaker families

Less care population ageing

Less inequality more freedom

Women to the labor market
Choice of personal relations

More inequality less freedom

Non-sustainable
Women to the labor market
Choice of personal relations

Less inequality
Same freedom

MORE
SUPPORT
STRONGER
FAMILIES

SUSTAINABLE

Same care
Population balance

Less inequality
More freedom
There is agreement on the need of the family for support

BUT

Different views on the role of the State within the EU:

- Scandinavia: social
- Anglosaxon countries: liberal
- Western Europe: conservative
- Southern Europe: familistic
- Central-Eastern Europe: transition (post-socialist)
There is agreement on the need of the family for support

BUT

Different views on what can be considered a family:

• Natural / Traditional families
• Single-parent families
• Other families
• Households
• LAT and “singles”
It seems much more productive to focus on family functions and to assess the impact of policies.

The family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children and children, for the full and harmonious development of their personality, should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.

We need to see what works and what doesn’t work.
Vulnerability defines the situations in which families that work need support to keep going.

Families ‘per se’ are not inevitably vulnerable. There are only families in disadvantaged positions and bad situations — situations that make them vulnerable.

‘Being vulnerable’ refers to a situation with an increased risk of becoming disadvantaged. It implies some sort of weakness or inability to deal with challenges.

It is not restricted to poverty.
Suggested goals for policy intervention:

1. Work-family balance
2. Intergenerational living arrangements
3. Parenting education
4. Inclusive urbanization
5. Gender-sensitive systems
6. Intergenerational solidarity
7. Social cohesion
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