

Statement sent by Foro de la Familia (Spanish Family Forum) for the "**Input to Human Rights Council resolution 29/22 on the protection of the family**".

The issue of the reconciliation of work and family life has been on the agenda for the protection of the Family for years. In Spain, due to certain historical and sociological factors, progress in the implementation of effective policies in this area can be described as slow. The proposals of Foro de la Familia (Spanish Family Forum) are the result of a consultation with associations, experts and families in respect of work/ family reconciliation which can be summarized as follows:

Legislation in collective bargaining agreements and in the field of work/family life reconciliation, which will provide for, among others:

- a. Leave of absence for the mother or father of a child until the age of three, with guaranteed return to work. If the 3 year period is divided between father & mother, it is to be extended one further year.
- b. Maternity leave to be extended to six months from the birth of the child, and paternity leave introduced for the father for a period of four months under the same conditions as maternity leave.
- c. Maternity/paternity leave to be extended in the case of multiple births, disability of the child and in one-parent families.
- d. Legal recognition of the right to a reduced working day during the first year of the child's life.
- e. A code of Good Practice in work/family reconciliation in the area of the Social Responsibility of enterprises.
- f. A positive points system in all public tenders for companies which demonstrate family-responsible and progressive reconciliation policies. The system should be duly accredited by an independent agency, such as the Family-responsible Company Certificate issued by the Foundation Mas Familia.
- g. Provision for a situation of "temporary dependence", when one or more of the children of the family need the full-time care and attention of one of the parents because of grave illness.
- h. Increase in the time and duration of breast-feeding from 1 to 2 hours and from 9 to 12 months, without reduction of salary and including the possibility of working a 6-hour day during this period.
- i. The development, in coordination with local city & town councils, of new methods of telephone & on-line welfare services aimed at the ill and the elderly, to improve attention to people with special needs and at the same time promoting the reconciliation of work and family demands.

j. Financial support and technical assessment for NGOs which work to help families by means of tenders for public subsidies.

In National, Regional and Local Administrations:

Promote at all levels of the Administration the following in collective bargaining agreements and among the social agents:

- a. Flexible working hours to adapt to the needs of workers with young children.
- b. Networking from the home.
- c. Periods of part-time working to allow for the care of children up to the age of three.
- d. Creation of crèches at the workplace and increase of public funding of a crèche network large enough to satisfy the needs of families. Support for the creation of privately run-crèches.
- e. Specific scientific training for mothers/fathers who decide to undertake the care of their children during their leave of absence and on returning to work.
- f. Increase in the number of day-care centres, homes for the elderly and schools, with longer and more flexible timetables.

Public subsidies for family-responsible enterprises:

- a. 100% discount of Social Security payments for a period of 1 year for companies which take on female staff who have stopped working temporarily to look after their families.
- b. 100% discount of Social Security payments for workers who are hired to substitute staff on leave of absence or with reduced working hours for family reasons.
- c. In collaboration with the various social agents, establish a Code of Good Practice in respect of the reconciliation of working life and family needs.
- d. Make available incentives to companies which provide their staff with centres or qualified personnel to help cover the needs of young, dependent or elderly people in their charge.
- e. Institutional support for approved Family-responsible Company Certificates.

Other measures:

- a. Promote preventive measures to help overcome conflict in the family (according to Council of Europe recommendations): prepare a Basic Draft Law for Family Protection and promote and strengthen public and private Centres for Family Orientation.

b. Review and reform the law governing divorce and separation procedure, allowing judges to invite the parties in conflict to attempt mediation.

- c. Promote Schools for Parents and Family Orientation associations and activities.
- d. Review and reform the electoral system, recognizing the right to vote of all family members by means of a family vote, so that minors can exercise their right through their parents or legal representatives.