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Brussels, 25 May 2005

On the 22nd and 23rd of March, the Heads of States and Governments took a decision crucial to the future of the European Union by adopting a Strategy which establishes the programme for the economic development of the Union for the next five years. The initial proposition made by the European Commission to focus substantive policies on growth and the creation of employment was not sufficient to lead the EU towards a real social cohesion. Also, we celebrate the fact that Heads of States and Governments announced their intention to keep social policies at the heart of considerations on the development of the European Union, reaffirming in this way their engagement with the European Social Model.

We are conscious that the creation of employment and growth are important aims. At the same time, we consider that high levels of social protection and the social inclusion of **all** Europeans, are not only rights but also key factors in the economic success of the European Union. These rights, integrated into the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, have been written into the new Constitution.

The mid-term evaluation of the Lisbon Strategy highlighted the limits of methods utilised over the past five years. If the intended aims continue to be well-defined, the means to attain them remain problematical. According to the conclusions of the Council, the Guidelines for future years are based on employment policy and the general trends of economic policy. It is therefore essential that these documents recall the commitment taken by European authorities regarding improved social cohesion, of a knowledge-based society and of sustainable development. Additionally, no social or economic policy limited only to employees can possibly ensure social cohesion and struggle against the exclusion of certain Europeans from the development of the EU.

CEV, EURAG, FEFAF, Inclusion Europe and MMMEurope affirm that all unremunerated work represents an integral part of the European Social Model, whether the work is carried out within the home by a family member (most often by women) or on a formal or informal voluntary basis by members of the community for a charity or in a protected workshop and day centres for the disabled.

Unremunerated workers are indispensable for the creation of a stable, developing and cohesive society.

However, this contribution, fundamental to our societies and economies, remains invisible and the people who carry it out continue to be considered inactive.

With this letter, CEV, EURAG, FEFAF, Inclusion Europe and MMMEurope request you to take into consideration the human, social and economic contribution of unremunerated workers. Only when the value of this unremunerated work is evaluated and recognised in the GDP of member states will it be possible to develop social and equality policies, and to promote **equal social rights for all** who serve their fellow citizens, carrying out activities irreplaceable for the development of the Union, with or without remuneration.

It is now critical to include, in national and European statistics, methods of collecting data to measure:

- the economic value of unremunerated work for the benefit of dependent **family** members, in the **voluntary** sector, and in **sheltered workshops**
- the impact of national policies on families and all their members, especially in the areas of
 - the elimination of all discrimination
 - the fight against domestic violence,
 - the risk of poverty of persons, in general women, who care or who have cared for family,
 - falling birthrates in member states of the EU.

Is the impact of immigration policies on families accompanying the economic migrant known?

Is the role of the skills acquired informally in the home and community recognised in methods of social inclusion?

Has the economic impact of the activity of the unremunerated carer (of children, elderly relatives, the disabled) on family or NGO been assessed?

Has the cultural and educational contribution of intergenerational contacts within family or NGO been assessed?

All data on unremunerated work should be disaggregated by gender and age.

We thank you for considering our points and we look forward to your response.

With warm regards,

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Europe's Millions of Non-Remunerated Workers: Who Cares?

Millions of non-remunerated workers throughout the European Union carry out work of added human, social and economic value to Society. However, as this work is not remunerated, it is invisible to all indicators. Whether it be carried out in the family or in the community, for the stakeholders – beneficiaries, users and workers – non-remunerated work is often a way out of social exclusion and a means of participating in social and economic life.

CEV, EURAG, FEFAP, Inclusion Europe and MMEurope strongly believe that such active non-remunerated work, carried out within the home by family members (mainly women), in sheltered workshops or day-centres by people with disabilities or performed by any citizens through formal or informal voluntary work (for example within non-profit associations or helping-out between neighbours), forms an integral part of the European Social Model. **Non-remunerated workers are vital to create a cohesive and stable society.** Moreover, those active within the home are fundamental sources of care, support and education to children, older persons, people who are ill and disabled people. **Without their invaluable contribution, the Community budget would be seriously compromised.**

However, this fundamental contribution to our societies and economies remains invisible.

In light of Article 47 of the European Union Constitutional Treaty, which gives all citizens, representative associations and civil society the right to make their voices heard, we would like to draw attention to the fact that volunteers and those active within the home are also citizens, whose invaluable non-remunerated work deserves fundamental recognition and support by the EU Institutions and by Member States. **The needs of these citizens, for example concerning life-long learning opportunities, social protection and psychological assistance, must be recognized.** However, how can this be achieved across the Union if there are no agreed indicators or data that shed light on the Community's millions of non-remunerated workers?

Several times already, the importance of non-remunerated work has been highlighted at international level and Governments were called to set up policies in favour of those performing this kind of work:

World Summit 1995, Copenhagen Declaration, Chapter 3, Article 46:

"Much unremunerated productive work, such as caring for children and older persons, producing and preparing food for the family, protecting the environment and providing voluntary assistance to vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and groups, is of great social importance. World wide, most of this work is done by women who often face the double burden of remunerated and unremunerated work. Efforts are needed to acknowledge the social and economic importance and value of unremunerated work, to facilitate labour-force participation in combination with such work through flexible working arrangements, encouraging voluntary social activities as well as broadening the very conception of productive work, and to accord social recognition for such work, including by developing methods for reflecting its value in quantitative terms for possible reflection in accounts that may be produced separately from, but consistent with, core national accounts."

World Assembly on Ageing, 2002, Article 15 of the Report:

"We recognize the important role played by families, volunteers, communities, older persons organizations and other community-based organizations in providing support and informal care to older persons in addition to services provided by Governments."

European Parliament Resolution on reconciling professional, family and private lives, (2003/2129(INI) – Bastos Report

http://www.db.europarl.eu.int/oeil/oeil_ViewDNL.ProcedureView?lang=1&procid=7301

EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Fédération Européenne
des Femmes Actives
au Foyer



Délégation Européenne
du Mouvement Mondial
des Mères



EURAG



Inclusion Europe



However,

- We need to know who carries out this non-remunerated work.
- We need to know what is the added value of this non-remunerated work to our societies and economies.
- We need to know what is the added value of this non-remunerated work to the individuals themselves, as well as the beneficiaries.
- We need to know what are the needs of non-profit organizations, families and individuals in this regard across the whole of the European Union.

At European level, there are neither agreed indicators nor data, which may give answers the questions raised above. In the light of this, how can appropriate supportive policies be developed?

CEV, EURAG, FEFAF Inclusion Europe and MMM urge the European Union and Member States to seriously recognize and value the contribution of millions of volunteers and citizens active within the home, sheltered workshops, day-centres, community-based organisations and NGOs and take appropriate steps to address the above-mentioned deficiencies. This will be an important step towards creating favourable policies for these millions of citizens and towards the "Social Europe" its citizens want to see.



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