



Motion on combining jobs and family

Adopted at the Annual meeting of EDS in Limassol (Cyprus)

23/07/2009

Presented by PWG "Policies for Europe"

3 Starting from the 1960s the fertility rates have been slowly but steadily decreasing in current
4 EU member states as well as largely in rest of the developed states of the world, the United
5 States being one of the few exceptions. Simultaneously the average age of having the first
6 child and the life expectancy in developed countries have both been steadily increasing. At
7 the same time the average age of moving from work life to pension hasn't been increasing
8 accordingly in a lot of European countries. These phenomena are even stronger among the
9 demographic group of highly educated people than the population in average.

10 These combined result to a situation where constantly the number of people entering the
11 working age is smaller than the number of people moving to pension. While positive
12 immigration rates constantly help to increase working age population this development still is
13 leading towards an unsustainable situation where the few have to provide for the many. At
14 the moment over 17 % of population in EU are older than 65 years of age and this group is
15 projected to reach 25 % of population in 2030s. In some states the projections are almost
16 double of the EU average.

17 The problem has to be rooted at the cause when there is still time. On the root level, the
18 economical status of a family suffers greatly from having a child both because the mother is
19 unable to work for a while and because of simultaneous increase in cost of living.

20 This encourages to postpone having children especially when the job security of a young
21 couple is unstable and/or when the salary level of neither can sustain their living. Especially
22 difficult the situation is for young couple where at least one is still studying at the age of late
23 twenties as even short interruption of studies could cause equal economical difficulties.

24 Some action has been already taken both to help young families and to introduce called for
25 regulations to ease rigidity of the working life to better adapt for the fact that in modern
26 world most mothers have to and want to have both a career and a family. The measures
27 taken haven't been in vain as very recently 14 EU countries have experienced slight increase
28 in the total number of live births. In some countries, however, the methods have not been
29 sufficient, have been short-sighted or have been utterly expensive compared to effect
30 reached. While the situations in countries vary we need to call for EU-wide boundaries
31 setting minimum levels that have to be expected by every member.

32 **We, the European Democrat Students, the Student organisation of the European**
33 **People's Party (EPP),**

34 Regarding demographic change as a serious challenge for the wider European society with a
35 threefold effect: on demography per se, labour market and social security.

36 Recognizing that holding up the fertility rate and stopping negative developments is a
37 concern for all EU states and while increasing immigration of working age people is an
38 important goal it cannot postpone the negative effects indefinitely if nothing else changes.

39 Considering thus that to encourage people to have children when they still are young families
40 with small children have to be supported economically and the rules of working life have to
41 better adapt to employees having children,

42 Considering that it is in common interest that the costs of founding a family are equally
43 shared by all members of the society, not just the age group concerned or their respective
44 employers,

45 Recognizing that it is in the best interest of a child's health and psychological development to
46 be able to stay home with his parent for at least the first six months of his life,

47 Consider that the European Union should insure that the EU wide family legislation is created
48 and respected, and which:

49 • Guarantees a basic financial support for families with newborn children for at least the
50 first six months of the baby's life and a possibility to extend the support time on a
51 lowered level beyond this time limit

52 • Guarantees that this basic support is on such level that the income level of the family
53 doesn't dramatically change while either parent is not working

54 • Guarantees that the mother can't lose her employment while she is on maternity
55 leave even if she decides to have an extended leave or to has multiple children
56 successively

57 • Guarantees that it's illegal to not take someone on as a permanent employee just
58 because she is a woman of a fertile age