

Press Release

20 years International Year of the Family – from ‘other stuff’ to the cornerstone of the society?!

Berlin, 15.05.2014 – On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family the German family organisations warn not to rest on the laurels of single measures but to continue to work consistently and effectively towards a family-friendly society. Even though family policy has moved quite a bit in the last 20 years, much remains to be done.

“The International Year of the Family 20 years ago was an important milestone. Especially in the last few years we have seen a lot of steps towards more family-friendliness, some of which – such as the legal claim to a spot in professional day-care for every child – point into the right direction. But so much more remains to be done before every family can live comfortably according to their needs”, the chairman of the Association of German Family Organisations (AGF) e.V., Dr. Klaus Zeh, states.

In retrospect, the German family organisations observe a considerable increase in amount and intensity of debates on family policy matters and also in the public awareness of family-related issues, and both partly led to some improvements for families. However, 20 years after the International Year it also is apparent that much is left to be done in order to acknowledge and dignify family care in a fair way.

Family-friendliness is not only good will, it is rather a necessity for our society’s continued existence. Thus, inclusion of all families into all levels of society must be achieved, just as the poverty risk for families needs to be lowered. In order to achieve this, the AGF, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, relies on the three elements time policies, development of infrastructures and monetary support. For instance, the AGF demands a detailed right to return in order to facilitate employees’ way back into full-time employment after having opted for a part-time job.

The year 1994 was proclaimed International Year of the Family by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 44/82 of 9 December 1989.