

PRESS RELEASE

ACT FOR IESE ALUMNI IN BARCELONA TO REVIEW THE DECREASE IN SOCIAL CAPITAL

“The data shows that atypical family models do not compare”

“We need to strengthen the family
so that it generates the social capital
that we need”

(Raúl Sánchez)

“The experience of The Family Watch
indicates that the support of a family today
is a universal need”

(Ignacio Socías)

“Instead of providing the definitive break up,
society should endorse the prevention,
guidance, and family intervention”

(Carlos Martínez de Aguirre)

The Family Watch is calling for thinkers, scholars and professionals in various fields for an impartial debate that will enable families to know how to support themselves more effectively, taking into account that the family is one of the institutions that provides a better society.

“Marriage: A garbage contract or social welfare?” published by Thomson Aranzadi, is a revealing analysis of the family from the legal point of view that recognizes the motives and the possible consequences of the recent reforms adopted in Spain.

There was an alumni meeting on Wednesday, May 13th titled “Why lower our social capital? Social and legislative causes for their wobbly decline.” The event was presented by Professor Nuria Chinchilla, Director ICWF – The International Center for Work and Family at IESE. The first presenter was Raul Sánchez, Director of the Institute of Family Studies at the International University of Catalunya, which conducted a comprehensive and lucid study on the situation of families in Spain. Using data from recent surveys, the study concluded that “if we want to guarantee a stable society for the future and a future for our children, it is important to understand what is happening to marriage and how we can strengthen it so that the family can produce the social capital that we need.”

During the meeting, the book, “Marriage: A garbage contract or social welfare?” edited by The Family Watch, was presented. The book analyzes the interdisciplinary law of matrimonial law, producing conclusions that serve as a critical starting point for future research on marriage and family. From the words of one of the authors, Carlos Martinez de Aguirre, "a title has been chosen that is striking with intention to cause the continuing debate on the importance of stability in marriage, parallel to the one

Martinez de Aguirre, Director of Civil Law and also the President of The Family Watch, stated that “the description of the latest legal reforms is a chronicle of the unstoppable rise and shaky fall of civil marriage in Spain over the last 25 years”. In his contribution titled, “The Destroyed Marriage,” he stated that the solution for the reconstruction of marriage is to regain the strategic functions of the family by demonstrating from data that there are family and marriage models that function better than others from the social standpoint, maintaining higher levels of stability within the family life. With this he continues, “The solution passes through the idea of

diversity so that the diverse family models presented in social life corresponds to the various legal models, adapting to the characteristics of each social model of regulation and the social function of these models”.

For Martínez de Aguirre, “The mission of lawyers and of the law is to create conditions so that the family can develop their social effectiveness.” Aguirre Martínez also commented on a law recently passed in Spain, “Marriage is essentially a compromise between the spouses first, and then between the spouses and society, and the “speedy divorce” is a just great solvent to both commitments.”

Taking Care of the Family Ecosystem

Published by Thomson Aranzadi, the book also includes contributions from, among others, the Secretary General of the Royal Academy of Jurisprudence and Legislation, Rafael Navarro-Valls. According to Navarro-Valls, “The law states that it is easier to prevent the erosion of the family ecosystem than to restore it. Our task as lawyers is to help create an atmosphere encouraging the design of a legal framework that assists families to remain united and properly raise their children.” Navarro-Valls also added that, “Marriage is not a forum [or court of law] where rights are negotiated; it is not an old-fashioned and reactionary barrier against a promiscuous, sexual life nor is it a calculation between costs and benefits; it is a commitment.”

The initial idea of the “family ecosystem,” has been developed in detail through the publication, “The Ecology of Marriage,” by Profesor María Blanco of the University of Navarra. During her presentation at the meeting, she stated, “So far, the majority of legal publications on the Spanish marriage law after the reform in 2005 is characterized as interpretive and technical, with the purpose of trying to update the legal practice to these new conditions, which initially aroused these reforms. However, almost nobody considered to reflect a bit more carefully on what was happening but it was essential. When it comes down to it, the role of the lawyer does the scientific research and critically studies the legal ordinance. This book did just that. It is recommended reading for anyone who does not believe that the new marriage law is a positive reality and if you want to clarify its purpose and value from the point of view of those above us.

Towards a Universal Concept of Family

The Family Watch is a think tank that focuses on analyzing the social reality of the family and from the interdisciplinary perspective, it is dedicated furthering studies, proposals and initiatives so that families will be better acquainted and receives adequate treatment and attention to the functions that develop society. The organization, the International Federation for Family Development, is designed to coordinate initiatives in favor of the Family Guidance, which is currently present in over 50 countries. It is a member of the special Consultative Status within the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, presided by the Committee of NGOs for Families in Vienna and has permanent representation the principal seats of the UN.

The General Director, Ignacio Socías, who also participated in the event, stated that, “The international presence of the participants of this project affirms that the need is universal.” Adding that, “It is not about complicating the situation with false debate over the types of families. It is enough to tell us what the majority of us understand for all families and about this we are able to evaluate if one of the models are socially more interesting than others, or if some deserve to be of more consideration than others... regardless of the personal choices and liberties one chooses to take in his or her own life.

The members of the Honorary Board of the Institute include specialists in distinctive fields, such as the psychiatrist Enrique Rojas; Nuria Chinchilla, who favors the balance between work and family and has been praised by Harvard University; Rosio Martin Cabiedes, who is the President of the Administration Board of the Europa Press; and also José Maria Irisarri, Executive President of Vértice 360º, which is one of the largest movie and television production companies in Spain. The International Advisory Council has representatives from over 50 countries.