



PRESS RELEASE

One UNIVERSAL Mother's day?

Brussels – 08 May 2012, The MMMI, (Make Mothers Matter International), wishes to honor Mothers' day in the 77 countries which celebrate it on May 13th 2012, and calls for the global harmonization of this annual event during the month of May by all the countries of the world.

The role of mothers and parents in society is too important and insufficiently acknowledged. It should enjoy a universal and simultaneous world-wide recognition. Mothers, although representing approximately three quarters of the world's adult women population are not officially recognized as a separate class with a specific function, mandate or identity. This is a minor yet illustrative example of how the value of motherhood is underrated and ironically at odds with governments that tend to categorize and classify everything.

Why has not the social and economic value of mothers been researched, statistically analyzed or quantified like everything else impacting our societies? Is the answer simply that the work that mothers perform is taken for granted?

Mothers' Day is an opportunity for children and partners to honor and acknowledge the true meaning of motherhood.

But it should also be celebrated to recognize the real contribution made by mothers to the economies of the world and their stabilizing, pacifying and nurturing effect on society, which exceeds even that of religion.

We therefore call on governments, world-wide, to recognize the true economic contribution to GDP made by mothers' unpaid work.

Recently, 12 thousand mothers responded to a pan-European survey¹, conducted by the MMMI European Delegation. The findings demonstrated that mothers throughout Europe feel that their role lacks the appropriate level of recognition and that their life as working mothers is both a physically and emotionally draining daily marathon. Among their priorities many requested:

- M* To be given the opportunity to prioritize time spent with their children, as an investment for the future
- M* To be provided with more flexible daycare solutions
- M* To be offered more flexibility in work schedules to reflect school hours and holidays
- M* To have access to more part-time employment opportunities
- M* That family-friendly companies be promoted
- M* For an increase of the length of maternity/parental leaves in certain countries

One of the thousands of European mother's message to policy makers:

« In a time of demographic ageing when children should be our future, having children feels frightening to me, or like a punishment. Nowadays I give birth to children who must be raised by others. Maternity leave is too short, space in a daycare center is hard to find, work hours and school hours do not correspond, and what to do with children in the

¹ Survey "What Matters to Mothers in Europe", full report "Facts & Figures: Survey of Mothers in Europe": www.mmmeeurope.org

summer while parents work? Give mothers a reasonable status, so that those who choose maternity don't have to opt between over-tiredness (burn-out), or poverty with lack of recognition »

Make Mothers Matter therefore believes that the role of parenthood should be universally celebrated in a united claim for awareness and recognition.

About the MMMI

The “Mouvement Mondial des Mères international/Make Mothers Matter” (MMMI), was created in 1947 and was granted UN consultative status in 1949. MMMI raises awareness of society and policy makers on the vital role of mothers for promoting peace and on their contribution to social, economic and cultural progress. MMM is an international, apolitical and non-denominational NGO. It holds ECOSOC general consultative status at the United Nations. The MMM network federates affiliates and associations in 40 countries and represents more than 6 million mothers in the world.

The European delegation of MMMI has the mission of conveying European mothers' voices and concerns to policy makers and institutions of the European Union regarding the impact of mothers on the educational, cultural, and economic development of their country.

The following countries will celebrate Mother's Day on May 13, 2012:

/	Anguilla	/	Estonia	/	Saint Kitts and Nevis
/	Aruba	/	Ethiopia	/	Saint Lucia
/	Australia	/	Fiji	/	Saint Vincent, Grenadines
/	Austria	/	Finland	/	Samoa
/	Bahamas	/	Germany	/	Singapore
/	Barbados	/	Ghana	/	Sint Maarten
/	Belgium	/	Greece	/	Slovakia
/	Belize	/	Grenada	/	South Africa
/	Bermuda	/	Honduras	/	Sri Lanka
/	Bonaire	/	Hong Kong	/	Suriname
/	Botswana	/	Iceland	/	Switzerland
/	Brazil	/	India	/	Taiwan
/	Brunei	/	Italy	/	Tanzania
/	Burma	/	Jamaica	/	Tonga
/	Canada	/	Japan	/	Singapore
/	Chile	/	Latvia	/	Trinidad and Tobago
/	China	/	Liechtenstein	/	Turkey
/	Colombia	/	Macao	/	Uganda
/	Croatia	/	Malaysia	/	Ukraine
/	Cuba	/	Malta	/	United States
/	Curaçao	/	Netherlands	/	Uruguay
/	Cyprus	/	New Zealand	/	Venezuela
/	Czech Republic	/	Pakistan	/	Vietnam
/	Denmark	/	Peru	/	Zambia
/	Dominica	/	Philippines	/	Zimbabwe
/	Ecuador	/	Puerto Rico		

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