

INTERVIEW/VINCENZO BASSI

"The EU discriminated against FAFCE because we are pro-family"

FAMILY AND EDUCATION

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The European Union is gradually distinguishing itself as a centre of power that fights against natural law — from life from conception to the family based on marriage. It is increasingly doing so by contravening its own treaties, as well as seeking to silence

opposing voices. One of the most recent examples is the exclusion of the Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe (FAFCE) from European funds. The *Daily Compass* interviewed FAFCE President Vincenzo Bassi.

Why was FAFCE excluded from EU funds?

First of all, I must say that we at FAFCE have never applied for European funding. However, given the financial difficulties we have been facing in the last two years, we tried to access European funds by submitting six projects concerning young people and the protection of children.

What makes FAFCE unique in Europe?

FAFCE is the only Catholic family association operating within the EU, as well as being the only family association with participatory status in the Council of Europe. This is important because, without acknowledging this fact, it is impossible to understand the seriousness of the Commission's behaviour. We are the only organisation promoting the family within European institutions through a series of initiatives, whereas many representatives of other cultures have unlimited funds. I work as a volunteer myself, and we have an annual budget of €250,000 which we struggle to reach. Therefore, we responded to EU calls for proposals, relying on experts in European project design. However, all our projects were rejected.

All six projects?

Yes. We are not claiming that we are entitled to the money, but we were very confident in the quality of our proposals. Reading between the lines of the Commission's reasons, there were indications of discrimination; in one case, it was quite obvious. According to the Commission, our approach 'could violate EU provisions on equality'. This is clear evidence of discrimination. Previously, there was discussion about whether other experiences could be 'included' and considered 'family'; now, the family experience is excluded. This is a significant development, as confirmed by the resolution approved by the European Parliament on 17 December. Beyond the issue of abortion, which is problematic in itself, the resolution targets organisations that oppose gender ideology. First, it was said that the family excludes; now, the family is excluded.

During the summer, you and FAFCE were also criticised by a lobby group called the European Parliamentary Forum (EPF), which compiled a list of organisations labelled as 'anti-rights'. Could you explain what happened?

I was included on the EPF's proscription list. According to this lobby on 'reproductive rights', I am practically a religious fanatic. The reason is that I am anti-gender and a friend of the bishops. We simply promote the family at an institutional level. We have an

office in Brussels and engage in legitimate lobbying to try to convince people with our arguments. Just consider that we have managed to set up an intergroup on birth rates involving even the socialists because our work is cross-party. Without access to those funds, we risk having to close down, or at least greatly limit, our activities. The question is: is the family consistent with European values? If the Commission thinks not, people need to know.

Clearly, we are talking about families based on marriage between a man and a woman, and is that what bothers them?

Legislation on the family falls outside the EU's remit. At FAFCE, we emphasise the importance of the family in relation to issues such as demography, which are relevant to social cohesion and therefore of interest to the EU. Furthermore, the family experience represented by FAFCE is generative and open to life, and is based on male-female complementarity.

While the EU institutions allocate substantial funding to LGBT organisations (see the LGBT Strategy 2026-2030), they deny funding to those who promote the traditional family unit. What are your thoughts on this?

Unfortunately, this is evident. It is the consequence of Europe becoming an increasingly non-pluralistic community. In the case of the abortion resolution, the request to include this initiative in the EU budget is crazy.

FAFCE deals with issues such as demographic decline, low birth rates, work-life balance, child protection, the harm caused by pornography, and the promotion of life and human dignity. Why is the EU establishment afraid of certain issues being addressed by a family association such as yours?

They have written that the family does not ensure 'gender equality'. So that is the issue. We focus on the family's service to the common good, which is generative and based on the complementarity of men and women, fathers and mothers. This generative model is clearly not accepted by the EU.

Yet the natural family is the foundation of everything.

Exactly. I was raised Catholic, but that is precisely why I speak to everyone: our commitment at FAFCE is to everyone. We don't defend a particular section of society; we defend the family, which is an integral part of society. If we promote the family, we promote society. But this is now considered contrary to European values.

What are your thoughts on the fact that associations defending life and the family are increasingly being labelled as 'anti-rights' at EU level?

It is reasonable to argue that there is a bias. A few years ago, the One of Us initiative in

defence of human embryos was supported by 1.8 million signatures, whereas the pro-abortion My Voice, My Choice initiative, which was approved by the European Parliament on 17 December 2025, received only 1.2 million signatures. However, the European Parliament and the Commission did not deem One of Us worthy of their attention. So, clearly, there is a bias. On the other hand, this pro-abortion resolution was actually promoted, reflecting a combination of the interests of the promoters of the popular initiative and the politics of the parliamentary majority. The point is that there is no fundamental pluralism. There is a resolution contrary to our principles, and that is a fact. However, the problem is that we are faced with a series of obstacles — the latest of which is a lack of access to funds — to assert these principles. We are not afraid of being in the minority because I am confident that, ultimately, reality will prevail over ideology. However, it is clear that there is an attempt to ensure that this minority does not even have the right to exist or to speak, and therefore to shape public opinion. Today, we are like David against Goliath.