



PRESS RELEASE

LIVING TOGETHER: NOTARIES AND CONSUMER ASSOCIATIONS EXPLAIN THE RULES AND REMEDIES OF LIFE TOGETHER

Milan, 7 March, 2014 - What are the legal safeguards for cohabiting couples? How can they regulate their own interests and common property? In the absence of marriage it becomes essential to know the means that can be used to define the rights and obligations of each partner, especially if the relationship were to end.

For complete information on this subject, the **National Council of Notaries** and **11** of the major **Consumer Associations** (*ADOC, Altroconsumo, Assoutenti, Casa del Consumatore, Cittadinanzattiva, Confconsumatori, Federconsumatori, Lega Consumatori, Movimento Consumatori, Movimento Difesa del Cittadino, Unione Nazionale Consumatori* or National Consumers Union) today presented in Milan the **tenth Citizen's Guide: "Cohabitation: Rules and Safeguards for Life Together"**.

This handbook provides useful tips to protect the interests of those who, by choice or legal impediment, are not married but wish to share their lives.

The dimensions of the phenomenon in Italy have led parliament and the courts, in recent years, to extend to cohabiting couples a series of rights that the law provided only for married couples.

The Guide helps to **clarify the differences - in terms of rights and duties - between a married couple and a couple living together**, while giving **indications for regulating key aspects** such as the management of the common home or its purchase, decisions on the upkeep, education and upbringing of children, assistance in case of illness or incapacity of one of the two partners, as well as provisions regarding succession, including the case of children born out of wedlock.

It is important to know, for example, that with regard to the **property regime** of a couple living together, it is up to the couple themselves to fill the legal vacuum with the negotiating and contractual instruments most appropriate to their needs in order to avoid disputes in the event the relationship ends.

Furthermore, a cohabiting partner has no **claim on the house** if it is owned by the other partner, so it is advisable to redefine the ownership so as not to find oneself without a roof over one's head if the relationship were to break down.



Whereas for married couples a will is an option, for unmarried partners it becomes a necessity. If one partner dies, the other might be without any protection.

The Guide also delves into the use of "**cohabitation agreements**" prepared by a Notary (and presented on 30 November last at the "Cohabitation Agreement Open Day"), whereby - according to current laws - different aspects of life for *de facto* couples may be contractually managed: for example, the home, ownership of other assets, maintenance of the partner in case of need and support in the case of illness etc.

This guide can be downloaded free of charge from the websites of the Notariat (www.notariato.it) and of the consumer groups that contributed to its production.

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