



## Tens of thousands march in Italy against anti-abortion meet

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Several tens of thousands of people participated on Sunday in the Italian city of Verona (northeast) in the Protest of Families to close a world congress organized by ultraconservative, anti-abortion militants and defenders of a traditional family model. Participants in this colorful march, from all over Italy by train or bus, carried balloons and banners in pink and blue with slogans such as "God, family, homeland" or "Yes to life, No to abortion," not. Before the beginning of the protest, at midday, they heard the final message from the organizers of the 13th World Congress of Families: "The family of fundamental pillars of our society should be at the center of government policies".

The peaceful demonstration took place after another Saturday demonstration in Verona summoned between 20,000 and 30,000 women from all over Europe to denounce the

thesis defended by the participants and considered "retrograde and discriminatory" by the participants.

The Congress also highlighted the deep divisions that exist over civil rights within the ruling majority in Italy formed by the League (far right), Vice President Matteo Salvini, and the 5 Star Movement of Luigi Di Maio.

Invited to the congress, Salvini reaffirmed his support for the families "made up of a father and a mother" while rejecting some positions of the congressmen who oppose the repeal of the law that legalizes abortion in Italy (approved in 1978) and against civil unions between same-sex couples (in force since 2016). "We do not touch the law 194 (...) There is no debate about abortion or marriage, everyone makes love with who they want and they eat with whom they want," he said Saturday to Salvini, who strongly opposes adoption by couples homosexuals (not contemplated by law, but regularly admitted by jurisprudence).