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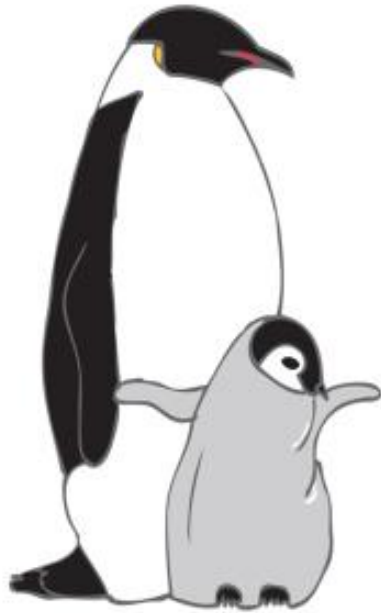
Reconciling Work and Family Life as a strategic tool to achieve gender equality and the SDGs

20 April 2016
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COFACE

- The European network of family organisations representing the interest of **all families**
- Founded in **1958**
- 59 organisations in **23 EU Member States**
- **100 million citizens**
- Funded by the **European Union** Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)





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2014 Year of **Reconciling** Work and Family Life in Europe



EUROPEAN RECONCILIATION PACKAGE

2014: YEAR OF RECONCILING WORK
AND FAMILY LIFE IN EUROPE

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RECONCILING FOR CARERS

13% of Europeans aged 50-64 care for a disabled or elderly family member every day or several times a week



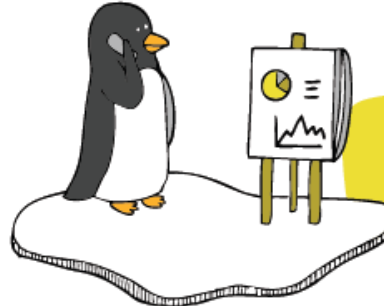
80% of care work in Europe is provided by informal carers.



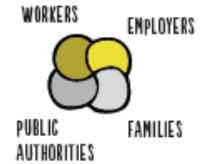
RECONCILING AT THE WORKPLACE

Less than half of the European workforce has flexibility in working hours (Eurofound EQLS 2012)

43%



In order to create a reconciliation friendly environment, all stakeholders must be involved in shaping legislative and practical initiatives.



RECOMMENDATION

The European Commission should initiate a Recommendation on the recognition of family and informal carers and for the adoption of provisions recognizing their legal status in Member States.

WOMEN AT WORK



Average gender pay gap in the EU **16%**

Average gender pension gap in the EU **39%**

The unequal share of unpaid work in the family has a direct impact on gender segregation, because women still adjust their working arrangements considering their caring responsibilities. They are more likely to take leaves, work part time or withdraw from the labour market.



RECOMMENDATION

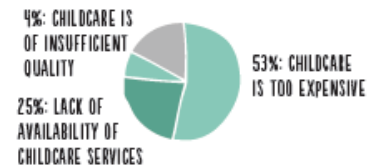
Reconciliation policies are not a "one-solution-fits-all" type of policies and companies should elaborate and introduce adapted instruments to fulfil the specific needs of the workers and of the company, according to its size and sector.

CHILDCARE, EDUCATION AND PARENTING



Almost **60%** of parents identifies availability (waiting lists, lack of services) as a difficulty concerning the usage of childcare in the EU27.

Across the EU, women reported that they do not work or work part-time because...

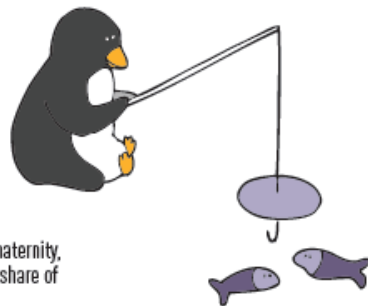
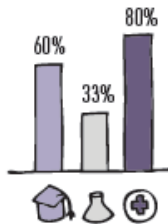


RECOMMENDATION

In addition to guaranteeing a legal right to a childcare place for all children after the end of the Leave period, there is the need for a childcare policy that supports the diversity of types of provision and is flexible enough to be able to reflect the real lives of the families who rely on these services locally.

RECOMMENDATION

The EU should adopt a coherent legislative package including maternity, paternity, parental and carers' leaves, to promote a more equal share of care responsibilities between women and men.



EU: Where are we?

- Debate on how to merge SDGs into Agenda 2030 (SDG 5.4) – where can the EU lead the way?
- EC Strategic engagement (not a strategy) for Gender Equality (women employment and work-life balance is first of its 5 areas of work) – pivotal for economic independence and gender equality

2015: A “New Start” proposed

European Commission launched the Roadmap for a package to support families reconcile their work and family&care responsibilities

COFACE welcomes the comprehensive approach, understanding that reconciling is a multi-faceted and complex topic

But let's not forget, to be efficient and promote real equality:

1. Reconciliation should be **for all** and not a benefit for young mothers, fathers or for cares only – change in work culture
2. Impact of **technologies**: more flexibility and smart working (positive), shift from culture of presence at the workplace to culture of availability 24/7 (negative)

3. Mobility and migration: need to include reconciliation needs of migrant and mobile workers (and their families) when designing legislation and policy – Transnational families, migrant care workers..

2016: Time to act

EC Reconciliation Package proposal:

- Ambition
- Comprehensive
- Life-cycle approach (= reconciliation measures as safety nets, preventing situations of vulnerability and poverty)
- Mix of legal and non-legal instruments

What we call for:

- Comprehensive set of legislative measures for leave policies
- A monitoring and benchmarking system for care services provision within the EU semester (beyond childcare)
- Policy guidance, awareness raising and share of practices for implementing better flexible working arrangements at Member States and company levels

Thank you for your attention!

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