Balancing family life and work

‘Exploring the possibilities of a European family-friendly label’

A Raise Awareness Meeting in the European Parliament
Company initiatives for workers with care responsibilities for disabled children or adults


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Eurofound
I have come home from work too tired to do household jobs that need to be done / several times a month /
Challenges of work-life balance by working hours (% at least several times a month)

- Too tired to do household jobs
  - 48+:
  - 41–47:
  - 35–40:
  - 21–34:

- Family responsibilities suffer
  - 48+:
  - 41–47:
  - 35–40:
  - 21–34:

- Difficult to concentrate at work
  - 48+:
  - 41–47:
  - 35–40:
  - 21–34:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
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<td>48+</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU27</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<td>EU15</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU12</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Men with children</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women with children</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Involved in childcare ‘every day’</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>Involved in eldercare ‘every day’</td>
<td>21%</td>
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• In nearly all countries more than half of carers under 65 combine care with employment
• About 7% of male workers and 11% of female workers are providing regular care (every day or several days a week), especially older workers (10% of men aged 50-64 and 14% of women)
• But among those with care responsibilities only half of women but 9 out of 10 men (are able to) work full-time
• Enabling access to employment of excluded carers
Impacts of care responsibilities on employment

- Financial disadvantage – nil/reduced hours
- Access to training and skills development
- Stress, sickness and absenteeism
- Career development and promotion
- Generally lack of action in the workplace to support working carers – benefits, information, services, flexible working times, work organisation and leave entitlements
- 2011 Eurofound study on ‘Company initiatives for workers with care responsibilities’: 11 Member States, 50 company case studies (on web)
### Company level measures: Type of employer support (1)

#### Flexibility / Flexicurity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective / Outcome</th>
<th>Practical measures</th>
<th>Minimising financial or other downsides</th>
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| **Support full-time working for carers** | For example:  
- Flexibility in working hours  
- Teleworking  
- Accessibility at work  
- Short- and emergency care leave | For example:  
- Payment during leave  
- Other measures to minimise financial or other downsides of flexibility (e.g. for career) |
| **Enable part-time working (downshifting) and caring** | For example:  
- Part-time work  
- Term-time working or equivalent | For example:  
- Measures to minimise income loss associated with hours reduction  
- Measures to minimise other downsides of part-time working (e.g. for career) |
| **Enable / complete lengthy time off for carers** | For example:  
- Longer carer leave  
- Possibility to accumulate (additional) leave  
- Maintaining continuity whilst on leave | For example:  
- Paid leave and/or ‘topping up’ social benefit payments whilst on leave  
- Helping employees to save/ self-provide income for leave periods  
- Measures to minimise other downsides of leave (e.g. for career) |
Carers Leave – ‘better than the minimum’

- **Energy company (UK)**
  - Additional leave; part-payment (for short-term leave); support for return to work

- **Insurance company, Pharmaceuticals company (NL)**
  - Extended eligibility; additional leave; part-payment (short-term)

- **Public sector (IE)**
  - Careful examination of downsides; help to return early
• **Social care provider (NL)**
  - Allows short interruptions of working day to go home to care

• **Pharmaceutical company (NL)**
  - Policy allows use of phone, e-mail and internet to deal with caring issues during working hours

• **Energy company (UK)**
  - By arrangement with line manager, can use phone for caring purposes whilst at work; privacy and use of company-supplied mobile phone also possible
### Company level measures: Type of employer support (2)

**Care-related supports**

- Information
- Referral; care brokerage
- Counselling
- Carer networks / support groups
- Practical daily life supports (e.g. home delivery of groceries etc.)
- Use of phone / other technology
- Direct care provision
- Support for care costs

**Other measures**

- Addressing carers’ health and well-being in occupational health services
- Carer surveys/audits
- Awareness-raising, promotion of positive attitudes amongst managers, co-workers etc.
- Lobbying/liaison with external stakeholders (e.g. other employers, care services)
• **Health insurer (NL)**
  - Company help desk and care agency

• **Chemical company (DE)**
  - Information and counselling service, shared with other companies in the region

• **Retail bank (AT)**
  - Information portal on work and care issues
Organising or providing care

- **Health insurance fund; pharmaceutical company (DE)**
  - External company contracted to help employees find care facilities

- **Social care provider (NL)**
  - Employees can use company’s care services free of charge (even if the person cared for is not a client of the organisation)

- **Electricity company (FR)**
  - Cooperation agreement with providers of assistance services

- **Social services (PT)**
  - Low-cost schooling for employees with disabled children
• **Raising awareness and promoting good practice**  
  - Amongst companies; among workers  
  - Also at policy and social dialogue levels  
• **Increasing take-up of measures**  
  - Support of line managers and colleagues  
  - Preferences of male and female workers; private matter  
• **Ensuring wider and more consistent provision**  
  - Labour legislation (EU and Member State)  
  - Formal provisions in social dialogue (EU, Member State, sectoral)  
• **Joined-up approach**  
  - Better integration of employment policy (and practice) and  
    home/community care service policy (and practice)  
• **Promote evaluation**
I AM THE WORLD'S BIGGEST LOSER - I LOST

- My place in the workforce
- My friends
- My social life
- My pension rights
- €12 on my carers allowance

Take any more and I'll lose my mind

01/26/2011