

Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Gothenburg, 17 November 2017

SUPPORTING WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Across the European Union, women remain considerably under-represented in the labour market:

	Women	Men
Overall employment rate	65%	77%
Working full-time	50%	71%
Working part-time	32%	9%
Inactive due to caring responsibilities	20%	2%

The economic loss due to the gender employment gap amounts to around **EUR 370 billion per year**. As part of the follow-up to the European Pillar of Social Rights, the Commission has proposed a **Work-life Balance package**, which will help working parents and carers to combine family lives and professional careers. It should also increase women's participation in the labour market.

The proposal sets higher minimum standards across the Member States by building on and extending existing rights. It is currently being discussed in the European Parliament and the Council.

THIS PROPOSAL IS GOOD FOR:



Citizens

- ▶ The conditions of parents and carers will be improved, leading to higher employment levels, earnings and career progression for women
- ▶ Gender pay gaps, pension gaps, as well as women's exposure to poverty will be reduced
- ▶ Better work-life balance will be created for families, with both parents having the time and incentive to participate in family life
- ▶ Caregivers that need to look after an elderly, ill or disabled relative will be able to take time off from work



Businesses





- ▶ More women on the labour market will increase the talent pool
- ▶ Businesses will better attract and retain workers
- ▶ Workers will be less absent from work and more motivated, improving productivity



Member States and the EU

- ▶ Public finances will be more sustainable by reducing unemployment and increasing tax income
- ▶ Increasing labour supply will boost competitiveness
- ▶ Demographic challenges will be addressed by making full use of our human capital

WHAT WILL THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL IMPROVE?

	CURRENT RULES AT EU LEVEL	COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL
Paternity Leave 	No minimum standards for paternity leave at EU-level	All working fathers will be able to take at least 10 working days of paternity leave around the time of birth of the child Paternity leave will be compensated at least at the level of sick pay
Parental Leave 	At least 4 months per parent, out of which one month is non-transferable between parents Parents can take leave until their child is 8 years old No minimum rules on allowance/payment	At least 4 months per parent that cannot be transferred between parents Parents can take leave in flexible forms Parents can take leave until their child is 12 years old Parental leave will be compensated at least at the level of sick pay
Carers' Leave 	No minimum standards for carers at EU-level (except 'force majeure' allowing to take short time off for imperative and unexpected family reasons) No minimum standards at EU level on the length of the leave nor compensation	All workers will have the right to 5 days of carers' leave per year to take care of seriously ill or dependent relatives Carers' leave will be compensated at least at the level of sick pay
Flexible Working Arrangements 	Right to request reduced and flexible working hours upon return from parental leave Right to request part-time work for all workers	All working parents of children up to 12 years old and carers with dependent relatives will have the right to request the following working arrangements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduced working hours 2. Flexible working hours 3. Flexibility on the place of work

The European Union will also support Member States in:

- ▶ Adopting measures to ensure accessible, affordable and quality formal care services
- ▶ Strengthening tax and benefits incentives to give women chances to work more

Other measures include:

- ▶ Prioritising EU funding
- ▶ Awareness-raising measures
- ▶ Sharing of good practices
- ▶ Enhanced monitoring, including within the European Semester
- ▶ Benchmarking and improving data collection at EU level

As stated under principle 9 regarding work-life balance of the European Pillar of Social Rights: 9. 'Parents and people with caring responsibilities have the right to suitable leave, flexible working arrangements and access to care services. Women and men shall have equal access to special leaves of absence in order to fulfil their caring responsibilities and be encouraged to use them in a balanced way.'