



European Commission



A NEW START TO SUPPORT WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

#SocialRights

Across the European Union, women remain considerably underrepresented in the labour market and in management:





- The **overall employment rate of women is still 11.5 pp lower** than that of men.
- **31.1% of working women work part-time** vs. 8.2% of working men. This is especially the case for those with children.
- **Just over 57.4% of women work full-time, compared to 75.5% of men.** Therefore the **full-time employment rate gap reaches 18 pp.**
- **Caring responsibilities are reasons for inactivity for almost 31% of inactive women**, while this is only the case for 4.5% of men.

Taking action is not only a question of fairness, but it is also an economic imperative: we estimate the economic loss due to the gender employment gap amounts to around €370 billion per year. The new Directive will help working parents and carers by not obliging them to make a choice between their family lives and their professional careers. It sets new or higher minimum standards to create more convergence between EU Member States, by preserving and extending existing rights.

THIS IS GOOD FOR

CITIZENS	BUSINESS	MEMBER STATES	ECONOMY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Directive will improve working parents' and carers' conditions, and lead to women's higher employment rate, earnings and better career progression. • Gender pay and pension gaps, as well as women's exposure to poverty, will be reduced. • Fathers will have more opportunities and incentives to participate in family life. • Caregivers looking after an elderly, ill or disabled relative will be able to take time off from work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More women on the labour market will increase the available talent pool. • Skills shortages will be addressed. • Businesses will better attract and retain workers. • Workers will be less absent from work and more motivated, which will improve companies' productivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public finances will be more sustainable by reducing unemployment and increasing tax incomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing labour supply will boost competitiveness. • Demographic challenges will be addressed by making full use of our human capital.

WHAT WILL THE NEW DIRECTIVE IMPROVE?

	CURRENT EU LAW	IMPACT OF THE NEW DIRECTIVE
Paternity Leave 	No minimum standards for paternity leave at EU level.	<p>Working fathers will be able to take at least 10 working days of paternity leave around the time of birth of the child.</p> <p>Paternity leave will be compensated at least at the level of sick pay.</p>
Parental Leave 	<p>At least 4 months per parent, out of which 1 month is non-transferable between parents.</p> <p>No minimum rules on allowance/payment.</p>	<p>At least 4 months per parent, out of which 2 months are non-transferable between parents. Parents can request to take the leave in flexible forms (full-time, part-time or in a piecemeal way).</p> <p>The 2 non-transferable months of parental leave will be compensated at a level set by Member States.</p>
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).	All workers will have the right to 5 working days of carers' leave per year.
Flexible Working Arrangements 	<p>Right to request reduced and flexible working hours upon return from parental leave.</p> <p>Right to request part-time work for all workers.</p>	<p>All working parents with children up to at least 8 years old and all carers will have the right to request the following flexible working arrangements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. reduced working hours 2. flexible working hours 3. flexibility on the place of work