

EASI - EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION PROGRAMME

MEN IN CARE (MIC) - WORKPLACE SUPPORT FOR CARING MASCULINITIES

INNOVATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

- Creation of a training and instruction service in care responsibilities and work-life balance oriented towards the male gender
- Development of a multidisciplinary support network in order to combat gender inequalities more efficiently

SCALE AND TYPE OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

- Incremental and Process Innovation

CALL NAME

Call for proposals on social innovation and national reforms – Innovative Work-life balance strategies

COUNTRY

Spain, France, Norway, Slovenia, Germany, Austria, Iceland and Poland

POLICY AREAS

Promotion of equality between women and men; Promotion of a high level of quality; and sustainable employment; Guarantee adequate and decent social protection
Combat discrimination;
Transnational dimension

TARGET GROUPS

National, regional and local authorities, Companies, public administrations and NGO, Social partners
Media, and Others

COORDINATOR

National University of Distance Education (UNED), Spain
Departamento de Sociología II

CO-BENEFICIARIES

Reform - Ressurssenter For Menn Stiftelse
Fundacion Cultural Primero De Mayo
Zveza Svobodnih Sindikatov Slovenije
Verein Fur Manner- Und
Geschlechterthemen Steiermark
Zdruzenje Delodajalcev Slovenije Giz
European Network for the Work with
Perpetrators of Domestic Violence Ev
Mirovni Institute Zavod
Haskoli Islands
Uniwersytet Jagiellonski
Stowarzyszenie Doradcow Europejskich
Plineu
Diversity Hub, Poland

EU CONTRIBUTION

€ 740,338.34 (77,78% of the total costs)

TOTAL COSTS

€ 951,866.93

DURATION

March 2019 – September 2022

WEBSITE

<https://www.men-in-care.eu/>

SUMMARY OF THE ACTION

Although men are becoming ever more engaged in caring activities, they encounter barriers to become involved in caring, which need to be reduced. Men in Care (MiC), a project involving 12 partners from seven countries (Austria, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Slovenia and Spain) aims to **improve workplace conditions to promote men taking caring roles**. MiC activities include assessing gender inequalities in current practices through national benchmarking reports; meetings with organisations interested in reducing barriers for Men in Care; organisational studies of policies and workplace experiences; development of a “Men in Care Guide” for companies; in-house seminars at workplaces for information exchange; trainings for managers, working men and workers’ representatives; multiplier events to disseminate best practices and a public campaign on how to promote Men in Care at the European level.

Keywords: **caring roles, inequality, work-life balance, workplace conditions**

Gender inequalities are partly determined by the unequal distribution of care burden between men and women. **More women than men aged 25 to 44 participate in routine household activities** and the time they spend for care activities on average is higher when compared to men in all eight countries included in the Men in Care (MiC) project. Unequal care distribution among the genders continues to exist even though the research indicates that **men’s attitudes towards care responsibilities have changed significantly** over the last decade and they are willing to take more care responsibilities. Nevertheless, the organisational culture concerning care responsibilities that exist in many companies works as a significant barrier to (more) equal distribution of care between women and men.



The project addresses two key challenges:
What workplaces can do to encourage men to use their right and entitlements and how to change organisational culture in companies.”

CONTEXT AND NEEDS

OBJECTIVES

01

- Improve workplace conditions to promote men taking caring roles

02

- Identify and test ways to reduce gender inequalities in work-life-balance policies and practices to improve the well-being of women and men



- 1 ASSESSMENT OF GENDER INEQUALITIES IN CURRENT WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES
- 2 TRAINING FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANISATIONS
- 3 'MEN IN CARE GUIDE' DEVELOPED FOR COMPANIES TO PROMOTE WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR MEN

METHODOLOGY

The project activities are organised in sequential steps. The first is focused on the **assessment of gender inequalities** in current work-life balance practices through national benchmarking reports. The second is centred on **promoting training for representatives of organisations**. The third is dedicated to producing results that can be used after the project is concluded, namely the '**Men in Care Guide**' developed for companies and including **recommendations to promote work-life balance for men**. These steps are supplemented by a public campaign on how to promote Men in Care at the European level and the creation of the **national networks of stakeholders** who will be responsible for the promotion of men in care after the project ends. The key methods that have been used for the external evaluation include documentary analysis, interviews, questionnaires and direct observations.

RESULTS

The project team is determined to secure the completion of the activities and pre-defined numbers. They expect to facilitate the **change of the employees' and employers' mindsets** concerning the men's role in care, and encourage changes in organisational practices. More particularly, they want to raise awareness about this topic and **provide research-based tools and arguments for stakeholders who are implementing activities** focused on the creation of a better gender balance in care. The team considers that changing mindsets, perceptions and organisational practices are slow processes affected by several external factors and therefore it will not be possible to attribute the noticed changes only to the project. MiC is expected to contribute to raising awareness about the topic and leverage changes.

“In each country they want to create a stakeholder network who would take over the implementation of the project.”

“

The innovative aspect is the idea. The idea that men can, want and should care in similar ways like women.”

“We want changes in the “heads” and perceptions of companies managers and trade union representatives. We hope they become multipliers.”

Men in care

WORKPLACE SUPPORT FOR CARING MASCULINITIES

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The Mic project can be considered innovative for several reasons. It introduces the idea that “men can, want and should **take responsibilities in similar ways as women**”, challenging ingrained and widespread perceptions of both employers and employees and thus, being possibly interpreted as innovative content. Furthermore, the target audience of the activities are men, whereas usually women are involved in work-life balance and care interventions. Finally, the main partners of the project claim that in other projects they usually work mostly only with other educational institutions. The structure of the MiC’s consortium, **involving different types of stakeholders**, such as trade unions and political institutions, can be therefore also understood as an innovation.

TRANSFERABILITY AND UPSCALING

It is most likely that upscaling of the project will start with the **extension of the project to the different regions of the same Member States that were involved in the project**. For instance, the institution responsible for the implementation of gender equality in the Basque region of Spain or the protestant church of Germany have already expressed the interest to implement activities created within the MiC. The initial general ideas related to the upscaling, transferring and sustainability of the project include the **creation of stakeholders networks** (including institutional members) taking-over the actions after the project ends; creation of online training tools with open access as well as universal guidelines to facilitate and secure further use, and the organisation’s annual conferences concerning men in care.



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PROJECT CANVA



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