



## Vote yes to strengthen Work-Life balance opportunities for Europe's families

On 13th September 2016, the European Parliament will be called on to vote the report 2016/2017(INI) "Creating labour market conditions favourable for family-work balance".

We are 11 networks of NGOs and Local Authorities and since 2012 we have been working together to raise awareness about the daily challenges faced by women and men across the EU in reconciling their work, family and private life. We represent millions of children, adults and families across the EU, and we are calling on Members of European Parliament to cast a positive vote for this report.

In 2015, many of us jointly published a comprehensive policy document, the "[European Reconciliation Package](#)", to propose concrete and coherent policy solutions, which cover the areas in the European Parliament report going to vote on 13th September. We believe that this European Parliament report contains many of the elements needed to trigger a positive change for women, men and Europe's families. Reconciliation policies, to be effective, must be a mix of different elements and should cover families' needs along the life-cycle and, therefore, we are calling on MEPs to vote this report in full, to avoid undermining its comprehensive and coherent nature.

In Europe today, 80% of care beyond care for children, is still provided by informal carers, mostly women family members and in family settings. Because of their lower income compared to men and because they are still expected to be the main carers, women often

have no other choice than drop out of the labour market or reduce their working hours to care for an elderly parent, a family member with disability or a child below school age. Lack of quality, affordable and accessible care and household services and a labour market unable to provide flexible working arrangements and adequate leave schemes are everyday concerns for a very high share of the population. Allowing men and women to better reconcile work, care and family responsibilities will positively impact female employment, as more women will be supported to enter and stay in paid employment, and on men's take-up of care responsibilities. Promoting legislation and policies that aim to share more equally the care responsibilities among women and men will help to reduce the discrimination and segregation women still face in the labour market and unlock their full potential. Moreover, it would reduce the rate of involuntary part-time employment and the drop-out rate of workers, especially women, from paid employment. It would also have an impact on future pensions, decreasing the risk of poverty in old age. We recall that there is a direct link between reconciliation and the reduction of the risk of poverty, especially among women. In the EU, the average gender pay gap is 16% and the gender pension gap is 40% and these figures should call us all to action.

At a time when women and men are losing their confidence in Europe, this report is a great opportunity to restore trust and show that Europe really cares about their real lives and concerns.

We count on your support!

Contact: Paola Panzeri, Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer, COFACE Families Europe, +32 2 500 56 92 – [ppanzeri@coface-eu.org](mailto:ppanzeri@coface-eu.org)