



Observatory for  
Sociopolitical Developments  
in Europe

# **Farewell to the supplementary- earner model – but where to now?**

Aims and requirements of  
reconciliation policy from a gender  
equality perspective

European Expert Meeting on 1-2 October 2018

**Debora Gärtner / Lena Reinschmidt**  
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## 1 Introduction

Caring for children or relatives in need of care and at the same time being employed – how can this be achieved successfully? Both should be possible, the majority of the German and European population believes. However, there is often a gap between wish and reality. Politics can and should support people in closing this gap. In effect, the issue of reconciliation of family and work has been discussed intensely in both Germany and Europe.

Most people are confronted more than once in their (professional) lives with the challenge of having to combine employment commitments with care tasks – be it caring for children or caring for relatives. Many households solve this problem via the so-called supplementary-earner model, in which the man usually works full-time, while the woman works part-time and takes over family responsibilities.

Women in Europe therefore still perform more (unpaid) care work than men and, at the same time, usually less paid work. The European Commission aims to tackle this with its work-life balance package of 26 April 2017.<sup>1</sup> With this package, the Commission aims to promote the reconciliation of family life, care and employment, thus contributing to gender equality in Europe.

Against the background of this work-life balance package, the [Observatory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe](#) has together with the [German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth \(BMFSFJ\)](#) organised a series of European Expert Meetings. The aim was to support the Europe-wide exchange of ideas and good practices with regard to different aspects and issues of reconciliation policy.

The focus of the first two Expert Meetings was on leave options for employed persons with care responsibilities. The third Expert Meeting focused on necessary infrastructure in the field of childcare.

With the fourth and final Expert Meeting of the series, a change of perspective took place. In this event, the question of how paid work and care work can be divided fairly between the sexes was at the core of the discussions. On 1 and 2 October 2018, many national and international experts from politics, academia and associations met in Berlin to discuss different approaches. The overarching theme of the discussion was “Farewell to the supplementary-earner model – but where to now? Aims and requirements of reconciliation policy from a gender equality perspective”.

Federal Minister Dr. Franziska Giffey opened the Expert Meeting and, in her speech, referred in particular to the status of the EU’s work-life balance directive as well as the second Gender Equality Report of the German Federal Government. Debora Gärtner and Lena Reinschmidt of the Observatory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe moderated the programme.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1311&langId=en>

This documentation presents the central findings of the two-day exchange and sums up the discussions.

For the Observatory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe

Debora Gärtner and Lena Reinschmidt

## 2 Programme

<b>Monday, 1 October 2018</b>	
<b>01:00 PM</b>	Arrival of participants and lunch
<b>01:30 PM</b>	<b>Welcome speech</b> Dr. Franziska Giffey (German Federal Minister of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth)
<b>02:00 PM</b>	<b>The European Commission's work-life balance package: Current status and relevance for gender equality</b> Dr. Irena Moozova (Director, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission)
<b>02:30 PM</b>	Coffee break
<b>03:00 PM</b>	<b>Scientific input: Challenges for work-life balance policies from a gender equality perspective: How can a farewell to the one-and-a half-earner model be achieved on basis of partnership?</b> Professor Dr. Uta Meier-Gräwe (member of the Expert Commission for the Second Gender Equality Report of the German Federal Government)
<b>03:30 PM</b>	<b>The starting point: Gender equality and work-life balance in Europe. What does the data tell us?</b> Dr. Lina Salanauskaite (researcher, European Institute for Gender Equality – EIGE)
<b>04:00 PM</b>	Coffee break
<b>04:30 PM</b>	<b>Panel 1: Measures and strategies for gender equality policy in Europe: Aims and requirements of reconciliation policy (short presentations and discussion)</b> Manuela Vollmann (Director of abz Austria) Ana Lite Mateo (Senior adviser, Spanish Institute for Women and Equal Opportunities)
<b>06:00 PM</b>	<b>Recap of the first day and questions for the second day</b>
<b>Afterwards:</b>	Joint dinner (optional)

**Tuesday, 2 October 2018**

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- 09:00 AM**      **Panel 2: Gender equality policy instruments to support the earner-carer model in the life course (short presentation and discussion)**
- Lieve De Lathouwer, PhD (Advisor/coordinator, Department of Labour and Social Economy of the Flemish Government)
- 
- 10:30 AM**      Coffee break
- 
- 11:00 AM**      **Reconciliation of family, care and employment as well as gender equality in Germany: How to proceed?**
- Angelika Engstler (Director of the department Policy Matters and Equality at the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth)
- 
- 11:30 AM**      **The European Commission's view on reconciliation and gender equality: Aims, trends and challenges**
- Fabian Lütz (Legal advisor, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission)
- 
- 11:45 AM**      **Final discussion and feedback (interactive format)**
- 
- 12:00 PM**      **Quo vadis reconciliation? Taking a look back on the event series and farewell**
- Mark Kamperhoff (Director of the department EU policy, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth)
- 
- 12:15 PM**      Closing with a joint lunch / End of the event
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### 3 Farewell to the supplementary-earner model – but where to now? Aims and requirements of reconciliation policy from a gender equality perspective

#### 3.1 Welcome speech by Federal Family Minister Dr. Franziska Giffey

Family minister Dr. Franziska Giffey opens the Expert Meeting. In her welcoming address, the minister stresses the importance of the draft work-life balance directive adopted by the European Council in June 2018. She also refers to the Second Gender Equality Report of the German Federal Government, which states the objective of equal participation of women and men in employment and care work. The Federal Government successfully introduced numerous measures, such as parental allowance, to support this goal, Dr. Giffey underlines. The expansion of childcare and childminding – a focal point of her work as Minister for Family Affairs – also made an important contribution to this. In conclusion, Minister Dr. Giffey welcomed the possibility of a European exchange, which offers a “concrete” contribution to improving the lives of people in Europe.



Dr. Franziska Giffey

Below, you will find the speech of Federal Minister Dr. Giffey in printed form.

*- The spoken word shall be considered authoritative -*

A warm welcome here at the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs! Thank you very much for having accepted our invitation to this fourth European Expert Meeting on the topic of reconciliation.

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs has been organising these Expert Meetings in the past two years together with the Observa-

tory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe in order to transfer the European debate on reconciliation onto the German level as well. We have held the Expert Meetings in order to learn: what do our European neighbours do regarding the reconciliation of family, care work and employment? This is also the aim of this meeting. I am looking forward to receiving today and tomorrow – together with you – new input from several European countries.

Since the third Expert Meeting in May 2018, we have achieved an important breakthrough: in June, we adopted the position on the “EU directive on work-life balance for parents and carers” at the European Council meeting in Luxembourg, thereby agreeing on minimum standards for the reconciliation of work and private life. If the next step with current trilogues between the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission yields an agreement, the directive could enter into force as early as 2019. In effect, this would mean: more time for

families and more individual options for parents and family carers. This includes, for instance, a ten-day paid leave for fathers around the time of their child's birth. This also includes a right to a mandatory "care period" to free family carers from employment.

The regulations allow women and men to reconcile their family and professional lives in partnership, in all EU member states. Women and men will be able to better share and divide care tasks among them. Men will have the opportunity to spend more time with their children, and women will have the opportunity to return to paid work quicker. With this, we aim to create binding rules on EU level that will make Europe more family-friendly and stronger.

Not long ago – a mere sixty years – the "ideal" family constellation in Germany looked like this: a man who provides for the whole family with his paid work and a woman who takes over the entire care work. It is also not all that long ago that in the majority of families, women "earned a little extra" by working a few hours a week, and at the same time still did everything regarding children and household work.

But increasingly, many mothers and fathers say: the supplementary-earner model does not reflect our expectations and aspirations in life. Especially young people – both men and women – are looking for financially independent partners who have both feet on the ground: one foot in the job and the other in the family. They want a partnership on equal terms in which gainful employment and care work are fairly shared – even when they have children.

While most mothers today are aware that there is no "either-or" between job and family, more and more fathers are also sure: they want to spend more time with their children in everyday life. This is why a majority of parents with young children find it ideal for the two parents to distribute (gainful) employment, childcare and housework on a partnership basis.

This is precisely what the Second Gender Equality Report of the German Federal Government states as the goal: it should be possible for all people, men and women, to perform private care work in addition to employment. At the same time, it should also always be possible for private care work to coexist alongside paid work.

If both partners want to have equal rights in career and family, these two must become reconcilable. Family policy has to set a suitable framework for this – for instance with parental allowances. The effect of parental allowance can be shown in figures: many mothers today take it for granted to be gainfully employed, even if their children are still quite young: in 2016, 57 percent of mothers with their youngest child at the age of two were employed. In 2006 – meaning before the introduction of parental allowance and the expansion of childcare facilities – the figure was at a mere 41 percent. Moreover, mothers working part-time today perform more hours on average than they did before. This translates into: more career opportunities, more economic independence, better old-age provision. At the same time, an increasing number of fathers interrupt or reduce their working hours in gainful employment in order to spend time with their children. More than one in three fathers now takes advantage of parental allowances – in 2008, it was only one in five. Moreover, 90 percent of fathers having taken parental leave say: this had no negative effects on my career. The International Labour Organisation claims that active fatherhood is one of the most important societal changes in the 21st century. Parental allowance has demonstrably contributed to the fact that attitudes, role models and the

essential realities of families in Germany have changed. This strengthens the families and is at the same time an important contribution to gender equality.

Parental allowance is an important cornerstone for the reconciliation of family and work. Another important condition is high-quality childcare. Working parents must be sure that their children are being well cared for while they are at work.

In Germany, for a long time this has been less self-evident than in some other European countries. One of my main priorities as Family Minister is therefore an expansion of childcare and childminding offers. We need more kita spots, more quality and lower fees in order to offer the benefits of early childhood education to all children. Starting in 2019, the federal government will contribute systematically and reliably to the costs of high-quality childcare and childminding for the first time. We will allocate 5.5 billion euro through 2022 for this – for more quality and lower fees, for the commitment to the objectives and for freedom in implementation.

Quality has many characteristics: a good child-carer-ratio, a strong leadership in the childcare facilities, language training, well-equipped facilities and much more. Each of our 16 federal states has its own strengths and needs. Therefore, the states are to decide by themselves which priorities they set. We will also invest in the further expansion of childcare facilities. Since 2013, the capacities of the childcare facilities have increased by tens of thousands of spots every year. Nonetheless, there are still places missing. Therefore, the Fourth Investment Programme for Childcare Financing continues. We will add another 300 million euro this year. In effect, this means: the federal government will create 100,000 additional places in childcare facilities until 2020. The “Gute-Kita-Gesetz” [law on good childcare facilities] also includes the introduction of exemptions from fees and contributions. The federal states use the federal funds for high-quality childcare to lower fees and contributions. We stipulate that contributions must be socially scaled everywhere. For families receiving housing benefit, child allowance, basic security allowances, social assistance or benefits under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act, we will abolish such contributions altogether. Following the “Gute Kita” law, we will also focus on all-day care for children in primary schools. The federal government will allocate two billion euro for the expansion of all-day childcare.

As you see, we are willing to invest a lot to ensure high-quality childcare. Because we want every child to make it. No matter what their parents do. No matter where the parents come or came from. Children who come to school with massive developmental deficits and language problems are born just as talented as others. But they do not have the same opportunities. Because they did not receive support before. I want educational opportunities for all children, from the very start. In practice, this will mean: every child is able to speak German, hold a pen or work with scissors when it enters the first grade of school. This was also the topic in the third European Expert Meeting of this event series: the contribution of childcare for reconciliation and support for children from disadvantaged families.

Expansion and quality of childcare offers are important for equal opportunities for children. At the same time, childcare facilitates the reconciliation of family and work. When speaking about reconciliation, we also have to take into account that family models today are more diverse than ever before. Parents raise their children together or on their own. They live their everyday

lives as patchwork or rainbow families. They perform care work for their relatives. Or they are single parents.

The reconciliation of family and work is particularly important for single parents. Being a single parent is one of the greatest poverty risks in Germany today. 20 percent of parents in Germany are single parents. Around 90 percent of them are women. One third of all single parents in Germany is threatened by poverty, 40 percent depend on social benefits (Hartz IV). We have achieved an important improvement for these people in the past year: a reform of the alimony advance regulations. Now, children up to the age of 18 are entitled to state advances on alimony payments for an unlimited period of time – in the past, there was an advance for a maximum of six years, and it ended at the age of 12. Almost 300,000 additional children and adolescents profit from this reform. This shows how urgently such action was needed!

The best protection for children against poverty is for their parents to be in work. And earning enough to make a living. We therefore introduced a statutory minimum wage three years ago. This benefits primarily women in low-paid service sectors and in marginal employment. With the introduction of the temporary part-time work provision, we ensure that parents have the right to return to full-time work when their children grow up and need less care. Women in particular – who work part-time more often and are more likely to get stuck in the “part-time trap” – often barely make ends meet with their salaries. As a result, there is a threat of poverty in cases of divorce or separation as well as in old age.

However, family provisions also need to be designed in a way that working and employment pay off. Empowerment, not support – that is what most families want. We keep this in mind when we increase the child allowances. Child allowance must benefit single parents – also if they receive alimonies or alimony advances for their children. And if someone earns a bit more, this should not be deducted entirely from the child allowance. Work always has to pay off.

New role models, more diverse family models, more family-oriented companies in a more flexible work environment – a lot of things have changed and continue to change. For policymakers, this means: there is a lot of room for re-design. I see this as an opportunity to take a closer look: what measures and instruments are available to us to promote reconciliation that benefits men and women alike? Reconciliation that brings what young people wish for: a partnership on equal terms in which gainful employment and care work are fairly shared – even with children.

I am therefore pleased that we are getting very concrete suggestions from other countries with these Expert Meetings. I am looking forward to seeing the results. What we are doing here is – by the way – Europe in its purest form. European cooperation means: we share our experiences, learn from each other, seek solutions together and thus contribute to a better life for the people on our continent.

European cooperation can take place on a small scale, in informal Expert Meetings. And it can have major effects: we see this in the work-life balance directive which enables women and men in all member states to reconcile their family and work lives on a partnership basis. This is concrete politics that reaches the people.

The living conditions across Europe are not the same. But in all 28 member states, there are parents who strive to reconcile their families and their jobs. In all 28 member states, women

benefit from performing independent paid work. In all 28 member states, a just distribution of paid work and care work makes families noticeably stronger.

They all have different experiences and different answers to these challenges. This makes it even more exciting to learn from each other. In this spirit: I wish you a good fourth Expert Meeting!

### **3.2 The European Commission's work-life balance package: Current status and relevance for gender equality – Dr. Irena Moozova**

Dr. Irena Moozova, Director for Equality in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, explains in her presentation the work-life balance package and underlines the need for a better reconciliation of work, family and care for both women and men.

In her presentation, Dr. Moozova reminds the audience that gender equality had already been enshrined in the Treaty of Rome. With the work-life balance directive, which is to enter into effect next year, the European Commission wants to advance this issue further, she explains. The argument for the work-life balance directive had been based above all on the economic disadvantages resulting from low levels of women's employment. According to Dr. Moozova, the non-employment of women costs a lot of money every year, for instance in the form of lower tax revenues.



*Dr. Irena Moozova*

In order to increase employment rates of women, the draft work-life balance directive provides for an increase in non-transferable parental leave months (often referred to as “fathers’ months”). According to the Commission, these fathers’ months should be remunerated with a compensation benefit at least equal to the sickness benefit in order to weaken economic incentives for the traditional division of tasks within families. A recent Eurobarometer survey had shown that the majority of fathers would like to take fathers’ leave. However, only about one in three fathers considered really taking parental leave. The work-life balance directive is supposed to close this gap between wish and reality. An expansion of fathers’ leave is also intended to achieve a stronger long-term involvement of fathers in the care and education of their children, which in turn will give mothers more room for gainful employment. In addition to non-transferable months, childcare that is accessible and affordable for everyone is particularly needed to support maternal employment, Dr. Moozova emphasises. The overall aim is a more balanced family-work pattern. Currently, women bear a significantly larger share of unpaid care work for children and for relatives. At the same time, they earn a statistical average of 16 percent less in gainful employment, as the gender pay gap for the EU shows. The European

Institute for Gender Equality has statistically researched the various areas of gainful employment. This included both the horizontal as well as the vertical segregation of the labour market. The studies showed that the glass ceiling, i.e. the low share of women in management positions, is still a relevant topic. The hope is that explicit rights for fathers – to be enshrined in the work-life balance directive – would now give positive impetus towards a more balanced relationship between care work and gainful employment for women and men.

In the subsequent discussion, the topic of women in management positions is addressed. Especially in the social sectors, in which the majority of employees are women, predominantly men hold management positions. The European Institute for Gender Equality continues accessing data on women in management positions on the European level.

Moreover, the question of vocational/career choices is brought up in the discussion. For instance, the “Europe Code Week” aims to get more girls interested in IT professions.

### **3.3 Scientific input: Challenges for work-life balance policies from a gender equality perspective: How can a farewell to the one-and-a half-earner-model be achieved on basis of partnership? – Professor Dr. Uta Meier-Gräwe**

In her presentation, Professor Dr. Uta Meier-Gräwe explains the connection between gender equality policy and reconciliation policy from a scientific perspective. Her focus is on the allocation of unpaid care work between men and women as well as the factors that have an influence on this allocation. Professor Meier-Gräwe presents the Gender Care Gap in Germany, which had been released with the expertise on the Second Gender Equality Report for the first time. She then explains possible starting points for how unpaid care work could be distributed differently.

With an amendment of the German Basic Law (Grundgesetz) in 1994, gender equality had been strengthened significantly in Germany. Since then, the state has to promote the implementation of actual equality and advocate de-facto equality. In this regard, the life course approach is relevant, because decisions in one phase of life often have an effect on subsequent phases of life. In many cases, follow-up decisions can arise which might no longer be changed and adapted easily. This path-dependency also exists to a large extent regarding decisions on the allocation of gainful employment and care work at relevant crossroads in life, for example the birth of a child. The Second Gender Equality Report of the German Federal Government takes a close look at the allocation of gainful employment and care work.



*Professor Dr. Uta Meier-Gräwe*

Professor Meier-Gräwe explains that three indicators illustrate the unequal allocation of gainful employment and care work between women and men in the life course. The first indicator, the Gender Pay Gap, shows that women earn significantly less per hour before taxes than men do. Part-time work and interruptions in employment due to care work, in particular the care and education of children and the care of relatives, reduce the monthly salary further. A mere 20 percent of all women earn enough themselves to secure their own subsistence level

and that of a child in the long term. In the second indicator, the Gender Pension Gap, the low salaries during the entire work life are being summarised. The Gender Pension Gap thus shows that the work of women, paid and unpaid, is valued less. The third indicator, the Gender Care Gap, makes it clear that women perform less paid and much more unpaid work. Especially when there are children in the family, women's time is consumed by unpaid care work and they are in effect lacking a substantial employment biography. Moreover, the affected persons alone do not make decisions regarding the allocation of unpaid care work. They are rather embedded in social interactions and moral beliefs, Professor Meier-Gräwe explains. These decisions are also influenced by social conditions such as the so-called “spousal splitting” (Ehgegattensplitting).

The Expert Commission that prepared the expertise for the Second Gender Equality Report has developed the so-called “earner-carer model” as a potential model for a partnership-based allocation of gainful employment and care work. It intends to support a change in the legal framework, policies and social norms and to help all people – men and women, parents and carers – to be substantially employed without excessive burdens and at the same time be able to perform unpaid care work. This requires a reorientation and adjustment of all institutions involved in the life course.

Besides unpaid care work, Professor Meier-Gräwe also emphasises the relevance of paid care work. A change in career choice behaviour towards the so-called STEM occupations (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) could be a good strategy for individuals, but society is also dependent on paid care work due to the change from an industrial society to a service society. Social occupations can make a significant contribution to value creation but are often designed in such a way that they offer little or no development potential. It is therefore important to further develop paid care work in the SAHGE professions (social work, household-related services, health and care, and education). This is a matter of a fundamental reassessment and revaluing, with better pay and improved development opportunities over the entire life course. According to Professor Meier-Gräwe, household services play a particularly important role.

This sector is currently often underestimated. In order to strengthen certified household-related services, the Expert Commission recommends a voucher model based on the Belgian scheme, which is presented in Panel 2.

The ensuing discussion revolves mainly around two issues: on the one hand, the need for support for single parents is addressed. This group of persons could, for example, be supported by the introduction of such a voucher model. A pilot project is currently being carried out in the state of Baden-Württemberg. On the other hand, the protection of persons who provide household-related services is addressed. This could be improved significantly with a voucher model as well.

### **3.4 The starting point: Gender equality and work-life balance in Europe. What does the data tell us? – Dr. Lina Salanauskaite**

Dr. Lina Salanauskaite is a researcher at the European Institute for Gender Equality, EIGE. In her presentation, she shares data and findings from various quantitative studies on gender equality in the labour market. Her focus is on the segregation of the labour market, the Gender Pay Gap and their relation to questions of reconciliation. In her presentation, she offers an overview of figures for Europe on the one hand and focuses on the concrete situation of women in IT occupations on the other hand.

Current figures of the Gender Equality Index<sup>2</sup> for the European Union prove that progress towards more equality is rather slow, Dr. Salanauskaite underlines. The EU countries make at least minor progress in almost all domains of the index. However, this does not hold true for the field of “time”, in particular. In contrast, some states have even taken steps backwards. The domain of “time” includes housework, care and education of children, care for relatives as well as hobbies.

In addition, EIGE has assessed various sources of data to compare (gainful) employment among women and men. It has also taken a closer look on specific sectors. Overall, the data showed that a large proportion of women, especially those with low qualifications, were not gainfully employed (just under 20 percent). Moreover, the figures illustrate the horizontal segregation between employment in the STEM<sup>3</sup> and the EHW<sup>4</sup> sectors. This segregation was considerably higher in fields with vocational trainings than in academic occupations. In addition, many women with vocational training in one of the STEM sectors are likely to switch to another profession. In professional reality, there is thus even greater segregation than during the vocational training. Among employees in the ICT<sup>5</sup> sectors, the share of women is even lower. A study by EIGE, which explicitly deals with the situation of employed women and men in the ICT industries, underpins expected results but also unexpected benefits. Women and men alike have to expect rather low flexibility and long working hours from jobs in the ICT

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<sup>2</sup> The Gender Quality Index is compiled by the European Institute for Gender Equality on the basis of indices for the six domains money, time, knowledge (education), work, power and health. Within the index, equality is achieved at a value of “1”. If the statistical value of women deviates from that of men, the value falls below 1. This means that deviations in the values of men and women are evaluated equally. Overview: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2015>

<sup>3</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM)

<sup>4</sup> Education, Health, Welfare (EHW)

<sup>5</sup> Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

sector, Dr. Salanauskaite explains. Overall, working hours are also longer than in other sectors, but the work patterns of men and women are more similar, i.e. fewer women work part-



*Dr. Lina Salanauskaite*

time. However, working outside normal business hours, e.g. at night or on weekends, is the exception, especially for women – unlike in other industries. Many employees still enjoy comparatively high flexibility, too. Meanwhile, the Gender Pay Gap is larger within the ICT sector than in some other industries. This corresponds to patterns on the labour market as a whole: the better the education/vocation, the bigger the Gender Pay Gap.

A closer look at the proportion of employees with and without chil-

children shows that in the ICT sector, women aged 30-39 are considerably less likely to have children than in other industry sectors. Overall, the ICT sectors thus offer flexibility and working hours that are within the normal working hours, but at the same time, long working hours pose an obstacle to the reconciliation of family and work.

With regard to policy instruments for the reconciliation of family and work, Dr. Salanauskaite emphasises that these should not be designed in a way that they would be predominantly used by women, as this could also have negative effects on the gainful employment of women.

In the subsequent discussion, the distribution of the Gender Pay Gap over the life course is addressed. It is emphasised that the Gender Pay Gap increases with age and with the birth of children. It decreases only slowly with the ageing of the children and remains well above the initial gap value of about ten percent at the age of 18-25. Furthermore, different “work cultures” in the individual sectors are discussed. The participants find that it is important to take a look at the men: are they able to take parental leave or work part-time? The answer to this question tells a lot about the need to change the respective work culture.

## 4 Panel 1: Measures and strategies for gender equality policy in Europe: Aims and requirements of reconciliation policy

### 4.1 Austria: Manuela Vollmann

Mrs. Manuela Vollmann is the director of abz\*Austria,<sup>6</sup> a consultancy firm for the public sector. She advises both companies and state institutions, such as the public employment service, on equality issues.

At the beginning of her presentation, Mrs. Vollmann emphasises that the initial situation in Austria is in itself very good. In 1995, there was a campaign of the former Minister of Women's Affairs on unpaid care work with the title "Real men share" (Ganze Männer machen halbe-halbe). Considered controversial back then, the campaign has in the long run proven to be successful and contributed to a change in laws in the year 2000.



*Manuela Vollmann, Ana Lite (sitting)*

According to this law, domestic work must be fairly divided in mar-

riages and partnership relationships, even if a person is not in gainful employment. In theory, the wider legal framework also promotes an equal apportionment of "Elternkarenz" (parental leave), which roughly corresponds to the German parental leave or the claim to financial benefits during parental leave. However, the actual implementation shows that almost exclusively mothers take parental leave, and the number of women on part-time leave has increased significantly – while the number of men has not.

This is also reflected in the Gender Pay Gap. Regarding this gap, Austria performs badly in comparison with other European countries. Mrs. Vollmann identifies stereotypes and traditional role models in work life as well as in society as a root problem. Reconciliation must not be seen as a pure "women's issue", she underlines. Rather, reconciliation should be perceived as a management issue. This includes the systematic management of different types of leave as well as interruptions in employment and thus also the creation of structural opportunities for care work and additional trainings. It is important that regulations do not cause resentment among those who do not assume responsibility for care work and will therefore not benefit from the instruments provided. Rather, all employees must be offered leave opportunities, she underlines.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.abzaustria.at/english>

Overall, it is important to win men over as “allies” for the issue, Mrs. Vollmann emphasises. Men should be offered more opportunities to reduce working time – as is provided for in the draft work-life balance directive. There is also discussion about lowering the work hours to 30 hours per week. This redistribution of paid work would also provide an opportunity to redistribute unpaid work. This would include support for longer periods of paternity leave. In addition to paternity leave, there is currently a debate about additional “early paternity” leave in Austria, the so-called “Daddy weeks”, taken right after birth. Overall, it can be observed that paternity leave supports the careers of women, Mrs. Vollmann concludes.

However, policymakers in Austria are currently choosing another path, she regrets. On 1 September 2018, a law came into force under which working hours were extended rather than shortened. Regular working hours of twelve hours per day and up to 60 hours per week can now be arranged legally. This leads to a deepening of reconciliation problems, also because there are major regional differences regarding childcare provisions as well as relatively few all-day schools. Furthermore, this could lead to a consolidation of gender differences – especially if men in particular are encouraged to extend their working hours.

In conclusion, Mrs. Vollmann emphasises that reconciliation policy does not per se promote gender equality. In principle, such policies should do two things: support a fair distribution of unpaid work and allow for rapid re-entry after career interruptions. Important are thus life-phase-oriented working-time models, new models of leadership and decision-making as well as top-sharing models, i.e. models for part-time work in management positions.

## 4.2 Spain: Ana Lite Mateo

Ms. Ana Lite Mateo works as a senior adviser at the Spanish Institute for Women and Equal Opportunities,<sup>7</sup> an autonomous body attached to the Ministry of the Presidency, Parliamentary Relations and Equality through the State Secretariat for Equality that is also the Spanish National Equality Body under the EU Gender Equal Treatment Directives.

In her presentation, Ms. Lite first introduces the Institute for Women and Equal Opportunities. The Institute exists since 1983 and has the objective of promoting gender equality and equal participation of women and men in political, cultural, economic and social life. There are currently about 100 people working at the institute. The focus of its work lies on the promotion of women from all spheres of society, in particular through active measures in the fields of labour market and (gainful) employment, through prevention and elimination of discrimination and through application of gender mainstreaming in all policy areas. Active measures also include the promotion of projects aiming a more equal sharing of household and care responsibilities between women and men.

Ms. Lite then continues by highlighting the situation of women in Spain, which shows similar gender gaps than in other EU countries. The current state of employment in Spain is still heavily affected by the economic and financial crisis. According to Spanish National Statistics Office, only about 53 percent of women are considered to be part of the labour force, i.e. either gain-

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.inmujer.gob.es/en/home.htm>

fully employed or registered as unemployed. For men, the rate is at 65 percent and thus around twelve percentage points higher. Overall, the situation of women and men in the labour market is very strongly characterised by horizontal and vertical segregation. Men and women predominantly work in very different sectors and women are still concentrated in lower-paid sectors and jobs. In comparison to Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, part-time work is much less common in Spain. Nevertheless, differences can be observed. Almost 25 percent of women in Spain work part-time, while the figure for men is at only around five percent.

There are also major differences regarding education/vocational trainings, Ms. Lite explains that in the past few years the number of women accessing and graduating from university has grown steadily and is now over 58 percent. Additionally, women generally obtain better academic results than men, which proves how skilful and prepared they are. Nearly half of the women aged 25 to 34 have a university degree, while this holds true for just over a third of the men. This reality, however does not shown in the labour market, where women are still concentrated in few sectors and occupations, and generally, earning lower salaries and with more difficulties to access to decision-making positions, due to persistent biases and gender stereotypes. What is striking, though, is that there are considerably more women in the current government – women head eleven ministries, while men head only four ministries. The most recent time use survey shows considerable differences regarding paid and unpaid work performed by women and men.<sup>8</sup> The Survey also illustrates the amount of unpaid work carried out by women, as they usually carry out most of the household and care responsibilities. On average, women spend 2 and a quarter hours more of care and household work every day than men and on average, women work with or without remuneration 1 hour and 29 minutes more than men do.

Main reasons that explain the lower participation of women compared to men in the labour market are the difficulties for work-life balance and the lack of sharing of household and care responsibilities. This also affects the greater use of part-time hiring by women, as well as greater interruptions in women's professional careers, that hinders women present and future salaries, and that has an impact on their pensions.

Despite a slight increase in the number of fathers benefiting from parental leave, women are still much more likely to take parental leave. In 2018, a new five-week paid paternity leave was introduced. However, there is no data on its adoption yet. Various regulations and plans are being discussed in Spain to further promote a better reconciliation of family life, care and work.

Various hurdles currently hamper a better reconciliation of family, care and career as well as a fairer allocation of unpaid care work. According to Ms. Lite, the most important of these hurdles are gender stereotypes in education, employment and in the media, an unequal allocation of care work, insufficiently accessible care infrastructure as well as a long overdue flexibilisation of working hours. In this context, it is particularly important 1) to strengthen a more equal sharing of household and care responsibilities between women and men by introducing well-

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<sup>8</sup> In Spain, men perform on average about 1 hour and 20 minutes more paid work than women do, while women perform about 2 hours and 15 minutes more unpaid work than men do.

designed work-life balance measures, such as equal non-transferable paid maternity, paternity and care leaves for dependent persons, 2) to facilitate more accessible quality care services for all, and to ensure their widest possible availability in all sectors and occupations, including for parents and caregivers taking up new forms of work; as well as to work on the rationalisation of working time, Ms. Lite underlines. However, a flexibilisation of working hours – especially in new forms of employment – could also lead to insufficient incomes and thus promote economic dependency, for example on the partner, that is why it is also important to regulate the new forms of work with a gender perspective.

### 4.3 Discussion

During the discussion, there is at first a reference to a study by the Berlin Social Science Centre (WZB) – which carries an encouraging message.<sup>9</sup> The study shows that fathers who have actively taken parental leave are more likely to subsequently reduce their working hours and take on more care work responsibilities. This underlines that reconciliation does not have to be a “women’s issue”. Rather, appropriate political framework conditions can change the actual allocation of care work.

During the discussion, the social dimension of the issue is addressed once again. The question of the effects of a reduction in working time must also be considered particularly in the light of the socio-economic situation. In this regard, support via compensatory payments is of particular importance.

In addition to the reduction of working hours, other instruments for better reconciliation are also highlighted during the discussion. These include the right to return to full-time work if working hours have been reduced, which is currently under discussion in Germany, as well as paternity leave immediately after birth, which is provided for in the work-life balance directive. A similar provision had been introduced in Spain in 2018. In Germany, a provision in this form has not existed yet. There is a critical comment highlighting that paternity leave in Spain is fully paid, but there is no general paid parental leave. Since mainly mothers take parental leave, this model in effect contains financial incentives for the male breadwinner model.

During the discussion, concrete cases from Austria are debated as well. In Austria – just like in Germany – there is a high Gender Pay Gap as well as no explicit right to return to full-time work. Moreover, Austria is a country with a lot of overtime hours and particularly great differences between men and women. On average, men work about three times as many overtime hours as women. In this regard, men thus also criticise being associated with the breadwinner role. This underlines the problems regarding working hours as shown in the presentation by Mrs. Vollmann.

Besides the overarching issue of reconciliation, the rather general work-life balance directive is also addressed during the discussion. Mobile work is currently being promoted at the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, one participant

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<sup>9</sup> Bünning, Mareike (2016): *Weniger Job = mehr Vater? Teilzeitarbeit kann väterliches Engagement fördern, Elternzeit allerdings noch mehr.* In: WZB Mitteilungen, Heft 153: 13-16. Available online: <https://bibliothek.wzb.eu/artikel/2016/f-20080.pdf>

reports. Support for mobile work has also led to a reduction in the number of part-time employees; or employees increased their work hours accordingly. What is important in this regard is broad acceptance.

Interruptions in work as a part of reconciliation are also being discussed. Participants report that there is growing acceptance for such interruptions. It becomes clear that it is difficult to reconcile work, family and care without creating disfavour and, at the same time, to do justice to the assumption of care responsibilities as a socially necessary task.

## 5 Panel 2: Gender equality policy instruments to support the earner-carer model in the life course

### 5.1 Belgium: Lieve De Lathouwer, PhD

Lieve de Lathouwer, Advisor at the Department of Labour and Social Economy of the Flemish Government, presents the Flemish voucher system for household services in her presentation. In her introduction, Mrs. de Lathouwer stresses that gender equality does not only require a redistribution of paid and unpaid care work within households. Rather, there is a need for the revaluation of household work in general. The Belgian voucher system contributes to this by shifting the area of household-related services from formerly unpaid family work or the informal market to the regular economic system. In this way, housework is turned into paid work that enjoys a significantly higher visibility in economic terms.



*Lieve de Lathouwer*

The voucher system was introduced in 2001. Since 2014, the regions have taken over the responsibility for the system. According to Mrs. de Lathouwer, the introduction of the voucher system was intended to serve three objectives in particular: first, the reconciliation of employment and care work was to be improved. Second, the introduction aimed at creating jobs for disadvantaged groups, such as the unemployed, the low-skilled or migrants. Third, the informal market in household services was to be

tackled. In this last respect, the aim of the system is to create formal employment relationships and thereby offer employees appropriate working and employment conditions.

The Flemish voucher system works as follows: private households can register and buy vouchers from the company Sodexo. The vouchers can be used to pay for household-related services. To do so, the vouchers must be redeemed at state-recognised service companies. These certified service companies hire employees who are subject to social insurance contributions and refer these employees to households. The voucher is valid for one hour of service. The vouchers can for example be used for cleaning, cooking and shopping services. They can also be used to pay for ironing and laundry services as well as transport services for people with impaired mobility. Single persons can purchase up to 500 vouchers a year, meaning they can buy up to 500 hours of service support in the household via the voucher system. For families and couples, the maximum is at 1,000 vouchers per household.<sup>10</sup> The voucher system

<sup>10</sup> Single parents are eligible for up to 2,000 vouchers a year.

is highly subsidised by the state. The service providers receive 22.69 euro for each hour worked. However, the households pay a mere 9 euro per voucher<sup>11</sup> and may also exempt the vouchers from taxes, meaning that the net price for the users is at 6.30 euro. The state covers the difference in these prices. This means that each voucher is subsidised with 13.69 euro.

Following this, Mrs. de Lathouwer presents various statistical data around the voucher system. It became apparent that the system has been met with broad acceptance and utilisation within the population. In 2016, about 670,000 people made use of the vouchers. In the same year, a total of 81.8 million vouchers were redeemed. The number of licensed service companies was at 1,500. These companies employed 88,334 people. These employees performed an average of 14 hours of work per month and per household.

According to Mrs. de Lathouwer, the voucher system is the most expensive labour market measure in Belgium. However, there are also major earn-back effects<sup>12</sup> for the government. The direct effects include savings in social benefits and an increase in tax revenues due to higher employment rates. Moreover, there are indirect effects – which are difficult to calculate, though. For instance, users can increase their own working time due to the household support services. This should have a positive impact on tax revenues for the state. In addition, new companies have been founded. More recent studies show that these earn-back effects even amount to 100 percent of the state expenditures, Mrs. de Lathouwer explains. Most of the users are families. Besides that, it is in particular older people who make use of the vouchers: 30 percent of the users are 65 years or older. According to Mrs. de Lathouwer, the vouchers are therefore an instrument that supports people to continue living in their own homes as they grow older. At the same time, it is striking that single parents represent a mere 6.5 percent of all users. In comparison to their share in the overall population of 9.2 percent, they are thus slightly under-represented.

In conclusion, Mrs. de Lathouwer presents findings of the Flemish Government regarding the service companies and their employees. It can be observed that about half of these companies were commercial enterprises. Additionally, there are social enterprises with or without profit orientation as well as municipal providers. A striking trend is the development towards increasingly fewer large companies. The employees have an employment contract with the approved service companies and do not have to meet any specific requirements. However, they must not be related to the users or live in the same household. The salary is laid down by a collective agreement for the sector and is higher than the Belgian minimum wage, which is between 8 and 10 euro.

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<sup>11</sup> The first 400 vouchers cost 9 euro. A further 100 vouchers can be purchased for 10 euro.

<sup>12</sup> Earn-back effects means income that results from own expenditures. In this specific case, these revenues for the state are taxes and duties (due to additional employment subject to social security contributions) as well as saved transfer payments (because the eligibility for such benefits is no longer given due to employment).



*Presentation material*

It can be observed that almost 100 percent of the employees are women and working part-time. In addition, employees from the new EU member states as well as from non-EU states are over-represented. However, among the older employees, there were also many employees with Belgian citizenship. Also, an above-average number of single parents are active in the sector of household-related services. Recent study results show that employees appreciate the high flexibility and autonomy in this

sector. At the same time, however, these are physically demanding activities that are not easy to perform, especially for older employees.

According to Mrs. de Lathouwer, the strengths of the system are the combination of better reconciliation for users on the one hand, and the creation of new jobs for low-skilled employees under appropriate working conditions as well as the avoidance of poverty on the other hand. Studies suggest that female users of the system are more likely to be employed (or work more), as the vouchers help them to reconcile family, household and working life/careers. There are also positive effects for the well-being of the users. However, it should be critically noted that mainly persons and households with higher incomes use the vouchers. Single parents, in contrast, are under-represented.

There are clear signs that the system has helped to create new jobs, Mrs. de Lathouwer explains. According to her, the employment rate for lower-skilled women has risen as there are more registered jobs that in this case are subject to social insurance contributions. The social group of unemployed and inactive persons can be activated via this instrument. Regarding the fight against the informal market, there is no reliable data, she acknowledges. This is mostly due to the lack of comparative data on the extent of informal employment prior to the introduction of the voucher system. In any case, it is clear that an entire new market has been created in the past years thanks to the voucher system. One of the weaknesses of the system is the limited range of services for which the vouchers can be used, Mrs. de Lathouwer notes. An expansion, for example in the area of gardening and smaller craftsman services, is currently being discussed, she adds. Moreover, the inclusion of such activities with a stronger male connotation could in the long-term lead to a revaluing of this field. In addition, there is a debate on using the vouchers as a (direct) means of payment as the vouchers add to the complexity of the system. Alternatives would be payments by invoice or cash payments. Another weakness is the limited profitability of the service companies. From a gender equality perspective, there are mixed results as well since workers in the service sector are still mostly female.

The following discussion at first revolves around the question of qualifications of the employees in this sector. In this context, Professor Dr. Meier-Gräwe emphasises the importance of appropriate qualification for the long-term success of the model. Qualification measures could make a significant contribution to upgrading and revaluing the image of household-related services. In order to create attractive professions, it is imperative to break away from the widespread image of the “cleaning lady”. In this sense, an expansion of the services offered via the voucher system should also be pursued in order to include other socially necessary activities such as gardening, reading to the elderly or childcare in the evenings. In response, Mrs. de Lathouwer reports that the Belgian voucher system does not provide for any qualification measures. However, due to a shortage of labour in this field, there is strong competition between the service companies. Therefore, many companies focus on aspects like occupational health and safety as well as ergonomics for their employees. Additionally, there has been a debate about the declining quality of the services, which has led many companies to invest in short trainings or courses. Besides qualifications, the missing differentiation according to social factors and conditions is being discussed. With a price of 9 or 6.30 euros, the vouchers are relatively inexpensive thanks to the state subsidies. However, the data on who uses the vouchers suggests that it is still households with higher incomes which benefit most notably from the voucher system. Alexander Nöhring of the Zukunftsforum Familie (ZFF) points out that a price differentiation according to socioeconomic criteria could counteract this trend. In this way, families with low incomes could also benefit from the vouchers.

## **5.2 Reconciliation of family, care and employment as well as gender equality in Germany: How to proceed? – Angelika Engstler**

In her presentation, Angelika Engstler, Director of the department Policy Matters at the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, explores the question of how progress can be made in the reconciliation of family and work as well as in gender equality in Germany. First, Mrs. Engstler looks back at over 30 years of independent gender equality policy in Germany. Equality policy issues have been addressed successfully, stakeholders have been strengthened and instruments such as equality reports have been established, Mrs. Engstler notes. In addition to this, gender equality has been enshrined by now in many national laws and is embedded in European and international agreements and institutions at the same time. However, there was no success in backing these quality leaps with the necessary structures, strategies and financial means. Therefore, strengthened structures can be used as levers, which are needed in order to achieve the desired progress.

One such conceptual approach is the Second Gender Equality Report of the German Federal Government, Mrs. Engstler says and thus refers to Professor Dr. Meier-Gräwe’s presentation of the previous day and the earner-carer model she introduced there. From a gender equality perspective, it is an essential requirement of reconciliation policy to ensure that both men and women can perform gainful employment as well as care work throughout the life course. The measures that were recommended in the Gender Equality Report have been incorporated into the political decision-making process and are also part of the current coalition agreement. The latter shows a significant overlap with the Second Gender Equality Report, Mrs. Engstler points out. In addition to the above-mentioned strengthening of structures, the implementation of the

coalition agreement might therefore contribute to a progress in gender equality policy. Besides the protection against violence and the revaluing of social professions, important projects include the revaluing of household-related services, the creation of better working conditions in care work as well as support for family carers, the improvement of equal pay and the incorporation of partnership relationships in tax law. In that sense, the coalition agreement certainly meets the requirements of an action plan for gender equality, Mrs. Engstler says.



*Angelika Engstler*

As a further lever for achieving progress in gender equality in Germany, Mrs. Engstler names interdepartmental cooperation along the lines of gender mainstreaming. Recommendations of the Second Gender Equality Report also target other departments, for instance the fields of collective bargaining in care professions or for mini jobs as well as minimum wages or digitisation. The Gender Equality Report should thus be incorporated into a structured and interdepartmental implementation process.

Taking gender equality aspects into account in other policy fields – such as reconciliation policy – is not only a constitutional mandate, but a characteristic of modern politics in a just and democratic society, she emphasises. How this is achieved in practice depends partially on the specific national context. However, some of these questions and answers can also be observed in other countries. Therefore, a European exchange is of particular importance, Mrs. Engstler points out, thanking all participants for this exchange.

In the following discussion round, the topic of partnership after separation or divorce is discussed as well as the often-associated difficulties at the crossroads between gender equality policy and reconciliation policy. Moreover, gender equality and social justice must be addressed jointly. During the debate, Manuela Vollmann points out that the involvement of companies and civil society actors in gender equality policy is essential if people are to be reached. Such participation is an essential aspect in the development of national action plans, she underlines. Following this, the discussion revolves around the question: which strategies can gender equality policy use to respond to politically regressive/reactionary trends and tendencies? In this regard, Mrs. Engstler considers an interdepartmental gender equality strategy to be a central instrument. It is also important to closely observe how measures work in socially differentiated terms. In addition, the respective associations must be strengthened in order to counter such tendencies, Mrs. Engstler insists.

### 5.3 The European Commission's view on reconciliation and gender equality: Aims, trends and challenges – Fabian Lütz

Fabian Lütz, legal advisor at the DG Justice and Consumers of the European Commission, discusses the draft directive by the European Commission and presents the first results of a



*Fabian Lütz*

new Eurobarometer survey. Taking a look at the European Gender Equality Index, there is still room for improvement in the EU in terms of equality between men and women, he acknowledges. This is why the European Commission tries to weigh in with its draft directive. Overall, the Commission considers the introduction of paid paternity leave to have the greatest leverage. Financial support during paternity leave

is essential to motivate fathers to make use of it and to involve them in family tasks at an early stage, Mr. Lütz argues. This view is also emphasised in a recent Eurobarometer survey, he adds. The survey provides explanations for the discrepancy between the oftentimes positive attitude of fathers towards parental leave and the actual use of it, which is significantly lower. At 38 percent, the majority of respondents cites financial benefits as a key factor in encouraging men to take parental leave. 33 percent consider the possibility to take parental leave in certain periodic blocks or in part-time an important factor. The survey also highlighted fears regarding future career developments. According to Mr. Lütz, this once again underscores the importance of protection against dismissal in connection with parental leave. The survey also showed that insufficient pay was a major reason why fathers did not take parental leave.<sup>13</sup>

Ending his presentation, Mr. Lütz presents the European Commission's Gender Pay Gap Action Plan, which had been adopted in November 2017. The eight points of the plan are a reflection of much of the content that has been addressed and discussed during the previous presentations and discussions, he points out. These include, for example, combating segregation by occupation and economic sector, eliminating care-related disadvantages as well as increasing recognition of women's skills, strains and responsibilities.

### 5.4 Final discussion and feedback

In the final, concluding discussion round, the participants collect open questions and aspects they gathered from this Expert Meeting. The abundance and range of statements show that the Europe-wide exchange via the Expert Meeting offered a lot of new information, perspectives and suggestions for the participants – very much in the spirit of mutual learning. At the

<sup>13</sup> When asked about the main reasons for not taking parental leave, 19 percent of the respondents claimed they could not afford to do so financially. Another 19 percent said their partner had taken the entire leave period.

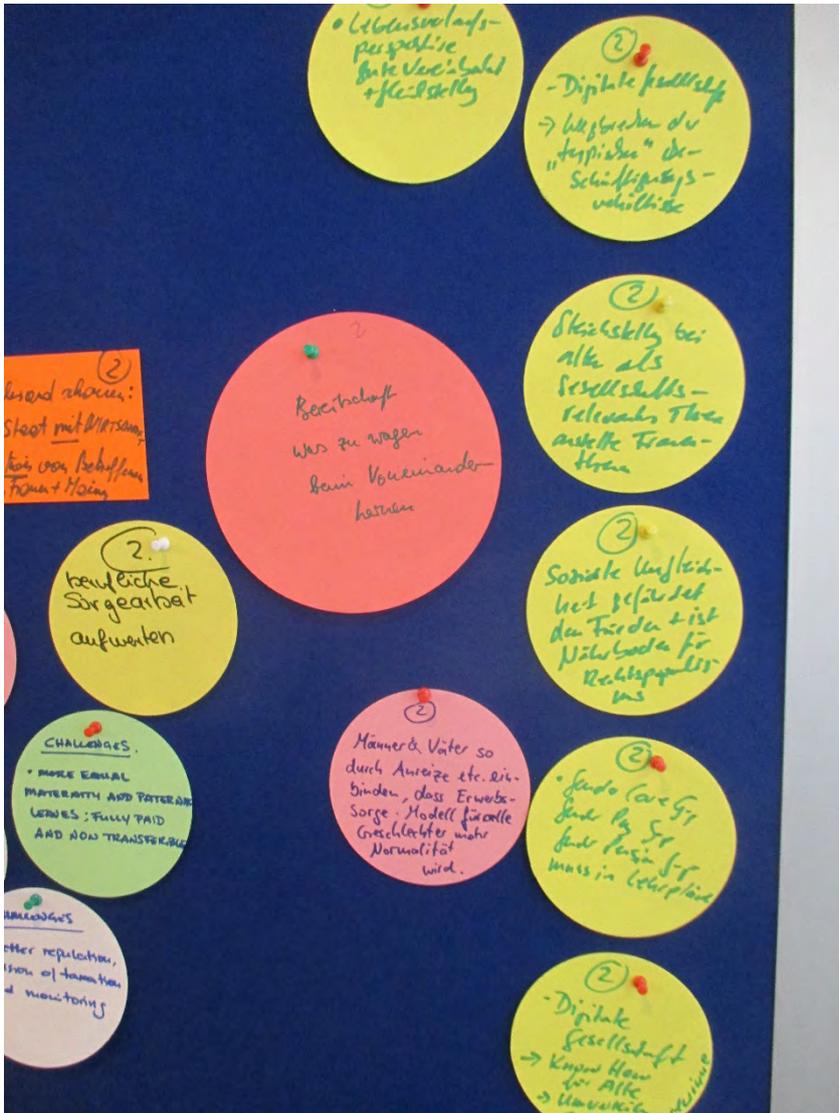
same time, it also became clear that there are still many challenges to be overcome on the road towards greater gender equality and improved reconciliation. In the following, some of the central aspects are highlighted.

Regarding the most important challenges, the participants named:

- Winning over men for issues like equality and reconciliation.
- Taking an even more socially differentiated view on the effects of reconciliation and gender equality policy strategies and measures.
- Increasing public recognition and appreciation for private as well as professional care and household work.
- Achieving higher involvement of men and fathers in care and household work in order to make the earner-carer model an actual reality.
- Gender equality requires a great deal of political will and financial resources, which must be defended and sustained, even in times of growing social inequality and increasing right-wing populism.
- Creating fairer periods of maternity and paternity leaves, which are paid for both sexes and are non-transferable.
- Strengthening the participation of companies/enterprises as well as citizens in the process of policymaking.

Open questions raised by the participants included:

- What are the correlations between gender inequality and social inequality? Which social groups profit from which reconciliation measures – or not?
- How can gender equality policy be structurally consolidated for both women and men in the future?
- What role do financial services or support play in comparison to household services when it comes to overcoming the pay gap?
- How can household-related services be upgraded regarding quality and be used as an instrument for gender equality?



Which aspects were the most interesting during the Expert Meeting? Regarding this last point, the participants named among other issues:

- Information on concrete measures from other European countries, in particular the Flemish voucher system for household-related services and the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth's teleworking model.
- The discussion about whether it makes strategic sense to extend the reconciliation of paid work and care work to "good life" in general, in order to not only reach people with care responsibilities, but also to achieve the broadest possible social support for reconciliation policy measures.
- There is a need for a double strategy: the revaluing of private care and household work must be considered jointly with the revaluing of care professions. They must not be viewed separately.

## 5.5 Quo vadis reconciliation? Taking a look back on the event series and farewell – Mark Kamperhoff

Closing the event, Mark Kamperhoff, director of the department EU policy at the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, thanks all participants for



*Mark Kamperhoff*

their contributions and the successful discussions. When two days full of exchange fly by so quickly, this is always a good signal, he says. For its part, the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth could draw many exciting insights from the presentations and the discussions – as has also been the case with earlier events of this series. However, it became clear that there are still unanswered questions and challenges to be addressed, he adds.

In conclusion, Mr. Kamperhoff gives a short review of the series of European Expert Meetings on reconciliation policy. In the first two Expert Meetings, the focus was on "more time for the family". First up was an event on fathers' involvement in family work. The second Expert Meeting dealt with different leave options and financial services for family carers. Nationwide high-quality childcare was the subject of the third Expert Meeting. Now, to conclude the series, there was a change in perspective and the discussion revolved around the question of what is needed to make increased reconciliation also lead to more gender equality.

According to Mr. Kamperhoff, the European Expert Meetings were a new format for the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth – which have turned out to be exciting and fruitful. Furthermore, the ministry received new impulses on how the results could now be fed into the policy process in the future, both at national and European level. In conclusion, Mr. Kamperhoff stresses the great importance of the European level for the work of the ministry. For instance, this Expert Meeting had only been one of several international events within a few days at the ministry. This shows the high importance the ministry attaches to European exchanges.

## 6 List of participants

Antje Asmus	Advisor for national gender equality policy, National Council of German Women's Organisations (Deutscher Frauenrat)
Clara Billen	Project lead, German Rural Women's Association (Deutscher Landfrauenverband e.V.)
Tina Böhmer	Student assistant, Observatory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe, ISS e.V.
Waltraud Dahs	Director of the department European and International Gender Equality Policy, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Lieve De Lathouwer, PhD	Advisor/coordinator, Department of Labour and Social Economy of the Flemish Government
Angelika Engstler	Director of the department Policy Matters, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Dr. Thilo Engel	Advisor for Gender Equality Laws in Public Services, Sector-specific Employment Situation of Women, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Natalie Etzholz	Department EU Policy, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Debora Gärtner	Research assistant, Observatory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe, ISS e.V.
Dr. Franziska Giffey	German Federal Minister of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Dr. Anja Heinze	Advisor, labour market, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Sven Iversen	Managing director, Working Group of German Family Associations (Arbeitsgemeinschaft der deutschen Familienorganisationen e.V., AGF)
Mark Kamperhoff	Director of the department EU Policy, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Ralph Kass	Advisor, Ministry of Equal Opportunities of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Karsten Kassner	Advisor, German Men's Association (Bundesforum Männer e.V.)
Helga Klingbeil-Weber	Advisor, Catholic Women's Association Germany (Katholische Frauengemeinschaft Deutschland e.V.)
Dr. Mara Kuhl	Head of the department Europe and Gender Equality at the Institute for Social Work and Social Education
Benjamin Landes	Director, Institute for Social Work and Social Education
Fabian Lütz	Legal advisor, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission
Ana Lite Mateo	Senior adviser, Spanish Institute for Women and Equal Opportunities
Professor Dr. Uta Meier-Gräwe	Member of the Expert Commission for the Second Gender Equality Report of the German Federal Government
Dr. Irena Moozova	Director, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission
Alexander Nöhning	Managing director, Future Forum Family (Zukunftsforum Familie e.V.)
Lena Reinschmidt	Research assistant, Observatory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe, ISS e.V.
Dr. Lina Salanauskaite	Researcher, The European Institute for Gender Equality – EIGE
Dr. Dag Schölper	Managing director, German Men's Association (Bundesforum Männer, Interessenverband für Jungen, Männer und Väter e.V.)
Maria Schulz	Project assistant, Observatory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe, ISS e.V.
Cornelia Spachtholz	Chairwoman of the board, Association of working mothers (Verband berufstätiger Mütter e.V.)
Dr. Ulrich Stockter	Director of the department Family Law/Maternity Leave/Parental Leave, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Manuela Vollmann	Director, abz Austria

Christiane Walz

Deputy Director of the department EU Policy, German Federal  
Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

## 7 Presentations

- I. Challenges for work-life balance policies from a gender equality perspective: How can a farewell to the one-and-a half-earner-model be achieved on basis of partnership – Professor Dr. Uta Meier-Gräwe
- II. Gender equality and work-life balance in Europe. What does the data tell us? – Dr. Lina Salanauskaite
- III. Gender Equality and Work-Life-Balance Policies in Austria – Manuela Vollmann
- IV. Gender Equality and WLB in Spain. Gender equality instruments and strategies in Europe: Objectives and demands with regard to work-life balance (national inputs and discussion) – Ana Lite Mateo
- V. The Service Voucher Scheme for Household Related Services in Flanders. A brief outline. – Dr. Lieve de Lathouwer

Challenges for work-life balance policies from a gender equality perspective:

➤ *How can a farewell to the one-and-a-half-earner-model be achieved on basis of partnerships?*

Prof. Dr. Uta Meier-Gräwe, Member of the Expert Commission for the Second Gender Equality Report of the German Federal Government

Input Fourth European Expert Meeting

1.10.2018 in Berlin



## ➤ Gender equality policy

- 1994 addition to German Basic Law, art. 3/2: So far: „Men and women shall have equal rights.“ Additional: „The state shall promote the actual implementation of equal rights for women and men and take steps to eliminate disadvantages that now exist.“
- The 2005 Coalition agreement between Christian Democratic Union, Christian Social Union, and Social Democrats states that there should be a gender equality report for every legislation period.
- In 2011, the First Gender Equality Report of the German government is released.
- In 2017, the Second Gender Equality Report followed.

## ➤ Reporting request by the German Government

"With regards to decisions during transition phases of the life course: which specific steps are required – in accordance with the outcome of the First Gender Equality Report – to enforce de facto gender equality between women and men and eradicate existing inequalities?"

## ➤ Guiding principle

"We strive for a society in which there are equal capabilities for women and men; lifetime opportunities and risks are equally apportioned."

German Government 2017: 77

## ➤ The Life Course Perspective

### Paid work



### (Unpaid) carework

Transition phases shape a life and are path-dependent.

All decisions have current as well as future effects and are interdependent.

KL14

## ➤ Gender Pay Gap

### Paid work

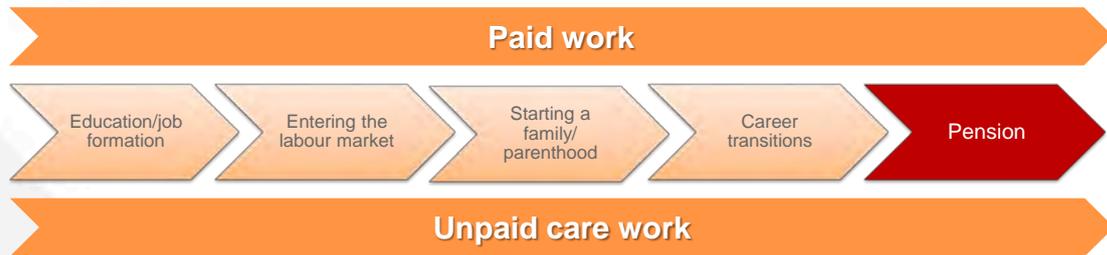


### Unpaid care work

#### Gender Pay Gap: 21% (2016)

- Employed women earn about one fifth (gross) less than men (statistical average).
- Two thirds of employed women do not earn enough to secure their economic existence in the long term.
- Only one in five women are - with their current salary - able to provide for themselves and a child in the long term.

## ➤ Gender Pension Gap



### Gender Pension Gap: 53% (2015)

- Life's work of women is economically lower valued than that of men (on statistical average).
- At the same time, there are no differences in the nature and value of acquired vocational qualifications.
- Qualification investments and professional activities of men are substantially more often used and better remunerated than those of women.

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1.10.2018

[gleichstellungsbericht.de](http://gleichstellungsbericht.de)

## ➤ Gender Care Gap



### Gender Care Gap: 52% (2012/13)

**Women perform 52% more unpaid care work than men.**

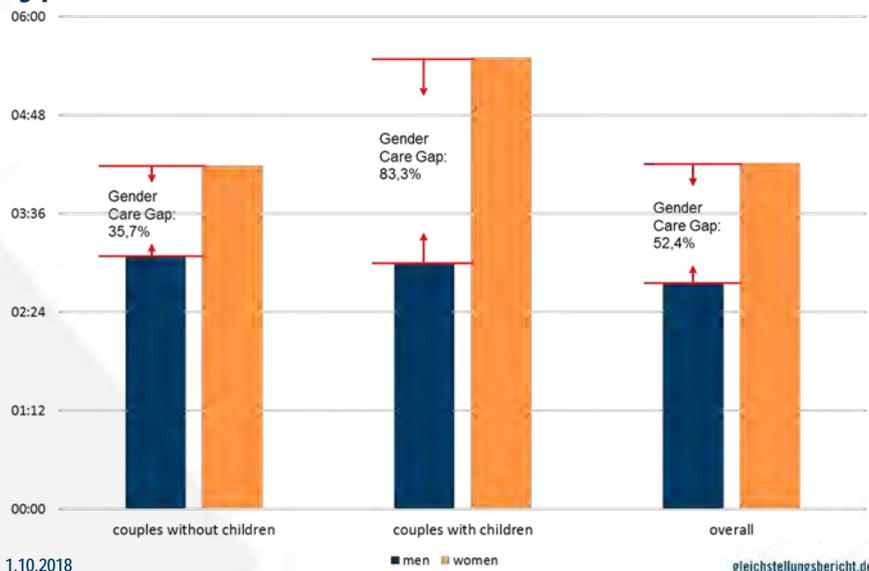
- The Gender Care Gap shows the relative difference between men and women in terms of daily unpaid care work. It shows by how much/what percentage the daily time women spend on average on unpaid care work exceeds the time men spend on such unpaid care work.

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## ➤ Total daily time expenditure contributed by men and women for unpaid care work in different household types

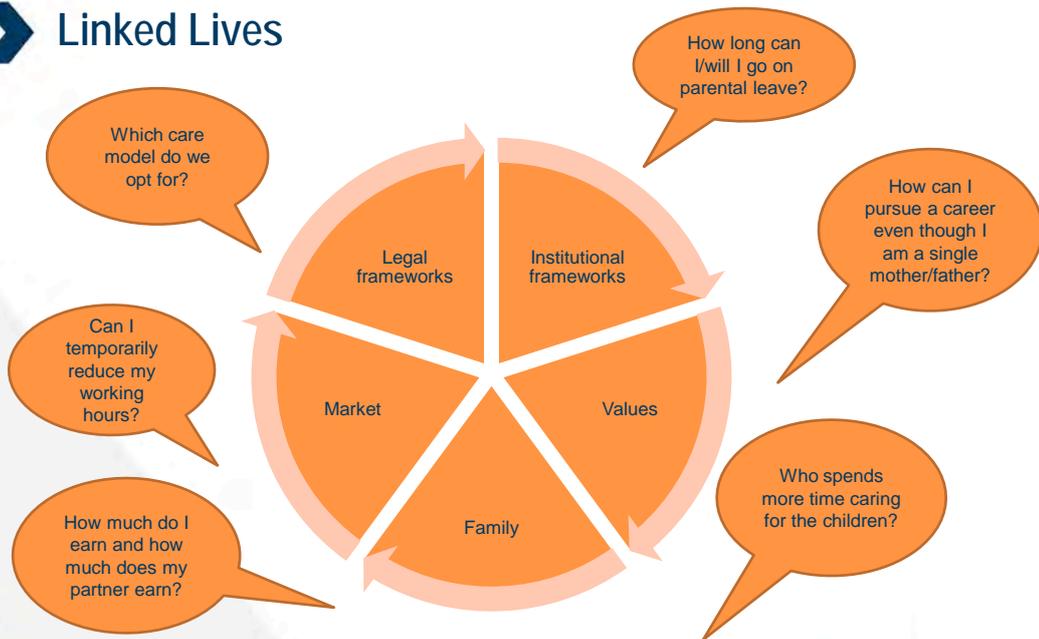


## ➤ Linked Lives

Substantial life course decisions are not taken in an individual, isolated manner but are embedded in social relationships with other people.

- This also includes decisions regarding workload-sharing in paid work and unpaid care work.
- Especially the legal and institutional framework conditions in Germany set the course for an uneven distribution between paid work and care work among married as well as unmarried partners.

## ➤ Linked Lives

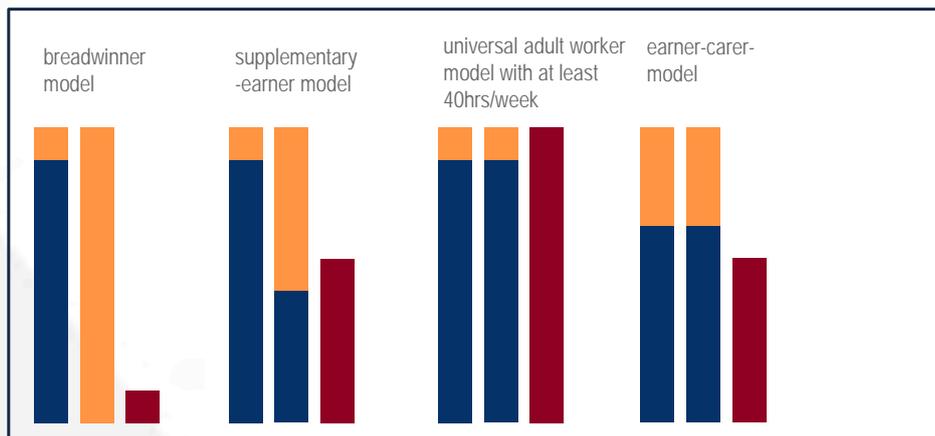


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## ➤ Arrangements of paid work and care work in partner relationships



Paid work, unpaid care work, external care work (paid care work and private care work by others, e.g. grandparents or children)

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## ➤ The Earner-Carer-Model

All women and men should be able to contribute private care work in addition to paid work; it should also always be possible for informal/unpaid care work to coexist alongside paid work.

- Institutional and political framework conditions have to ensure that the earner-carer-model can be pursued without the persons being constantly overstretched.
- This means a revision of state regulations, politics and legal and social norms which focus on the breadwinner-, supplementary-earner- and universal adult worker models.

## ➤ Selected policy recommendations

### Revaluing care work professions = SAHGE jobs

#### Definition: SAHGE jobs

SA: Social work, H: Household-related services,  
G: Health and care work, E: Child rearing

- Restructuring of job profiles, training and advanced education, as well as career and promotion opportunities
- Adequate remuneration during nursing training
- Campaign to make these professions more attractive

## ➤ Selected policy recommendations

### Framework conditions and infrastructure in private housekeeping

- Promotion of employment subject to social insurance contributions and engagement of service providers
- Minimum legal work requirements in accordance with the ILO Convention No. 189
- Safeguarding standards for good and sustainable employment by introducing independent and standardised certificates
- Introduction of a subsidised voucher system for household-related services (in line with the Belgian model)

## ➤ Further information

<http://www.gleichstellungsbericht.de/>

- Second Gender Equality Report and additional Factsheets, Expertise and working papers in German

<http://www.gleichstellungsbericht.de/de/topic/10.english.html>

- Summary in English

<https://www.bmfsfj.de/publikationen>

- Ordering the printed version in German

[#gleichstellungsbericht](https://twitter.com/gleichstellungsbericht)





## Gender equality and work-life balance in Europe. What does the data tell us?

European Expert Meeting,  
1-2 October, 2018  
Berlin

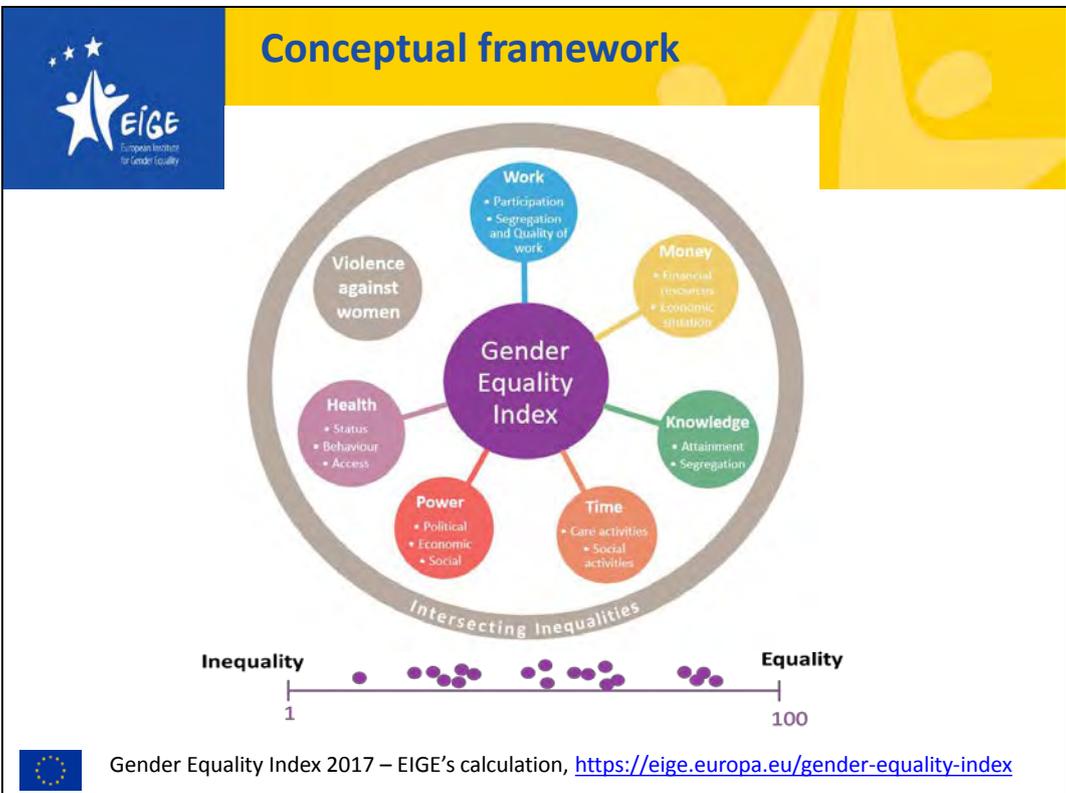
Dr. Lina Salanauskaite

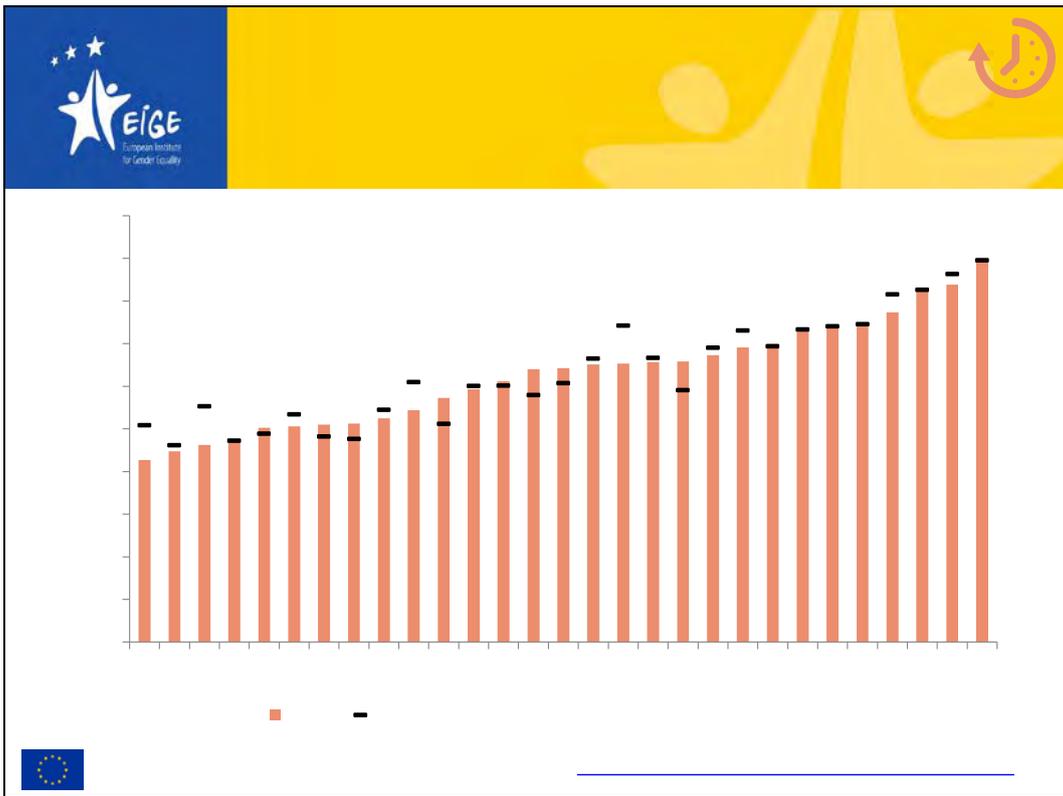


## At a snail's pace towards gender equality

- In 2018 in Europe, **gender equality** seems to be more than ever standing still **at a crossroad**.
  - Gender balanced workforce/women are increasingly referred to as a pool of “untapped potential” that could give a new boost to jobs and digital growth and improve the social dimension of the European Union (EU).
  - Still, the Gender Equality Index (EIGE), consistently reports a “snail’s pace” in reaching gender equality: marginal progress and even some slips backwards in certain areas of life or across countries imply the EU’s score for gender equality is still at **66.2 out of 100** (2017 Index release data).
- **Focus of today’s presentation:** gender segregation, pay gap and links to work-life balance



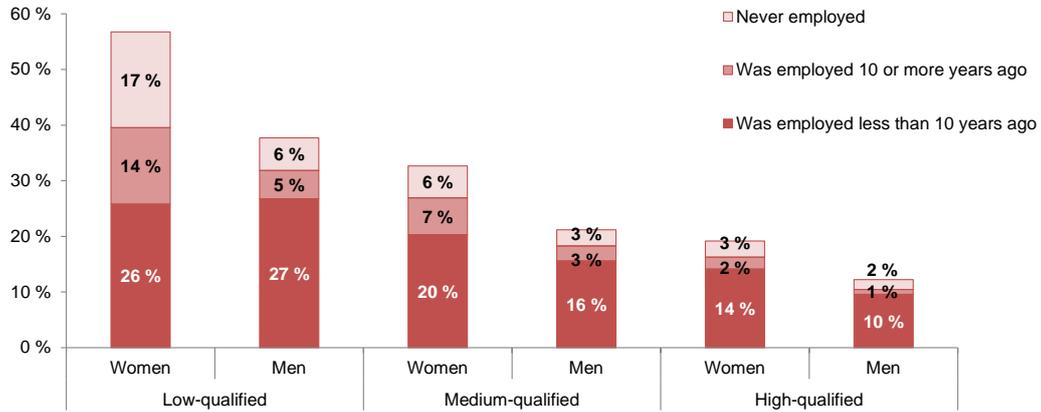




**To change the presence,  
one needs to tackle occupational segregation  
through numerous ways, including better work-life  
balance for women and men**

Source:  
EIGE (2018). Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance  
EIGE (2017). Gender, skills and precarious work in the EU

## Detachment from the labour market

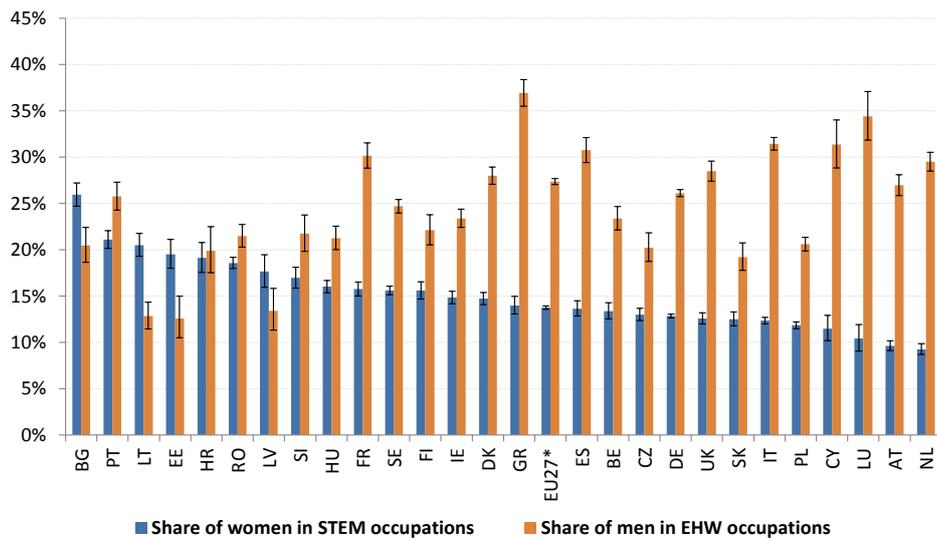


EIGE's calculations based on LFS, 2014, age group 20-64, excluding students



EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2017). Gender, skills and precarious work in the EU.

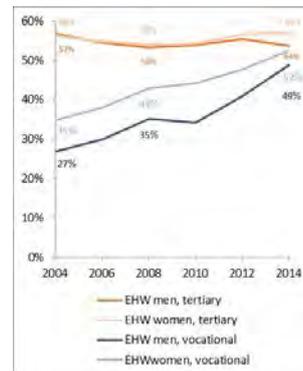
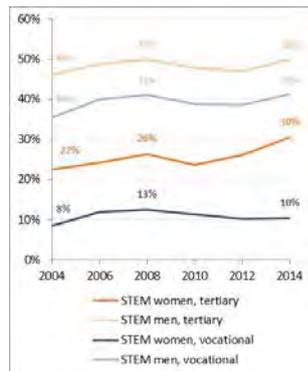
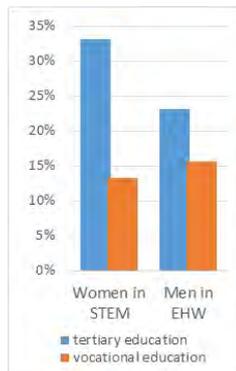
## Gender segregation in STEM and EHW occupations by country



EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Study and work in the EU: set apart by gender.

## Occupational pathways of STEM and EHW graduates

- Across the EU, vocational education has a higher gender segregation than tertiary education.
- Women graduating from STEM in vocational education are in particular disadvantaged regarding opportunities to work in STEM jobs.



EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Study and work in the EU: set apart by gender.

## Very few girls aspire to become ICT professionals

Across the EU, from **3% to 15%** of teenage boys aspire to work as ICT professionals at age 30; In only **four EU countries**, from **1% to 3%** of teenage girls aspire to work as ICT professionals at age 30.

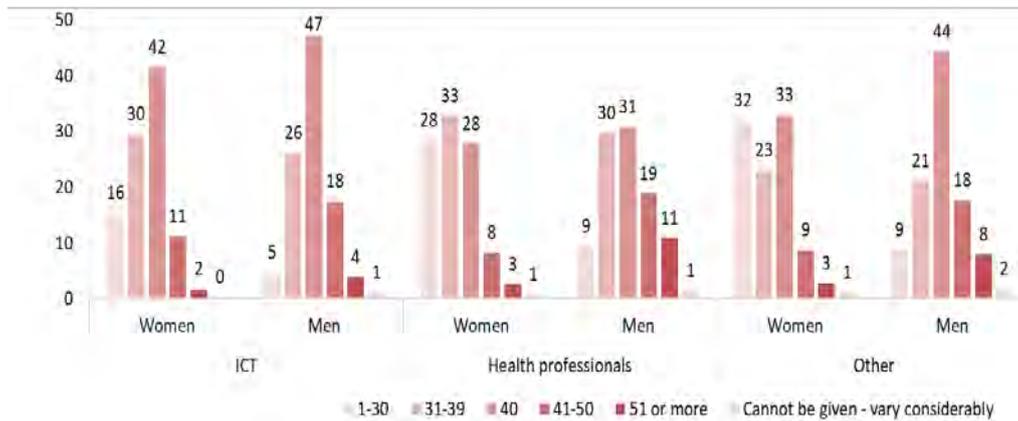
Share of 15-year-olds expecting to work as ICT professionals at age 30 (%), 2015:



EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance.

## Work-life balance: longer working hours in ICT jobs

Average weekly working hours in the EU, by occupational group and gender (20-64, %, 2016):



EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance.

## Women tend to work in more gender diverse environment

Gender composition of ICT specialists' workplace in the EU-28 (% , 2015):

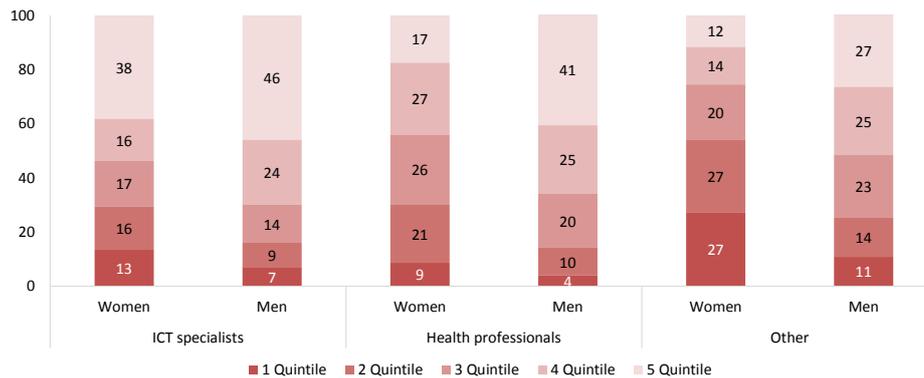


EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance.



## Persistent gender gaps in earnings: 16% in hourly gross pay and 40% - in total earnings

- Gender gaps in net earnings are particularly large among those in more qualified/better paid jobs



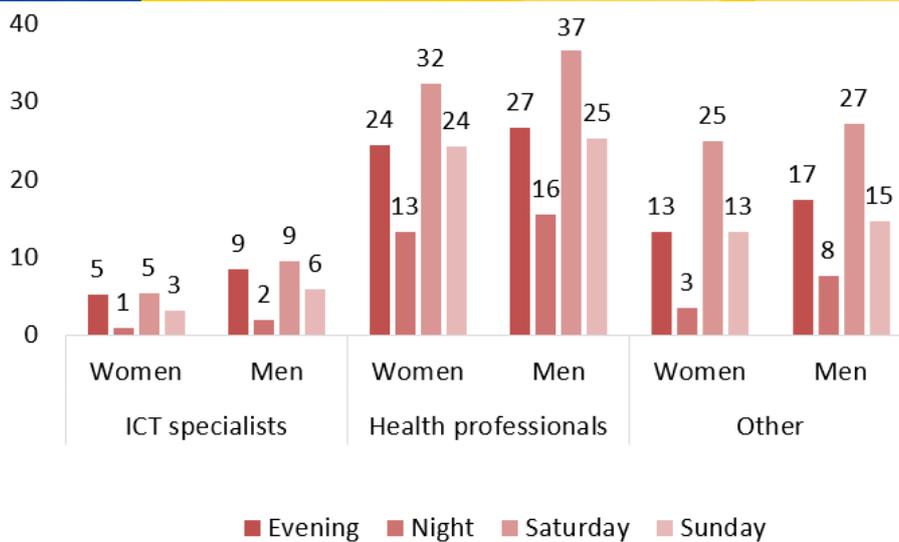
EIGE's calculations based on LFS, 2014, age group 20-64, excluding students



EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance.

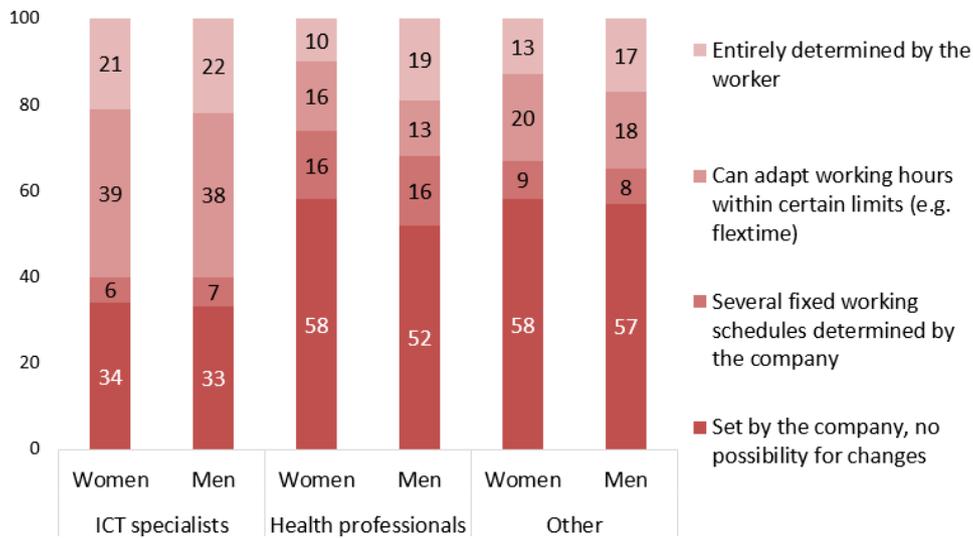


## ... but atypical hours are less common in ICT...



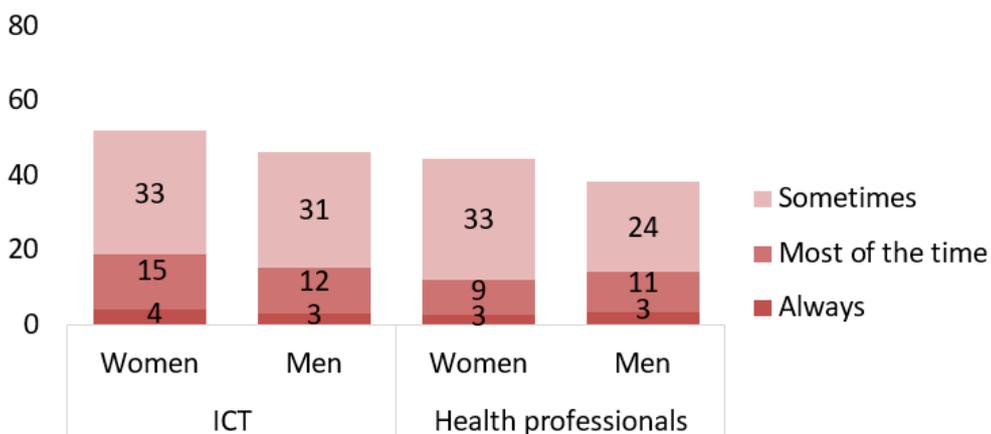
EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance.

## ...and ICT specialists have more flexibility in working hours



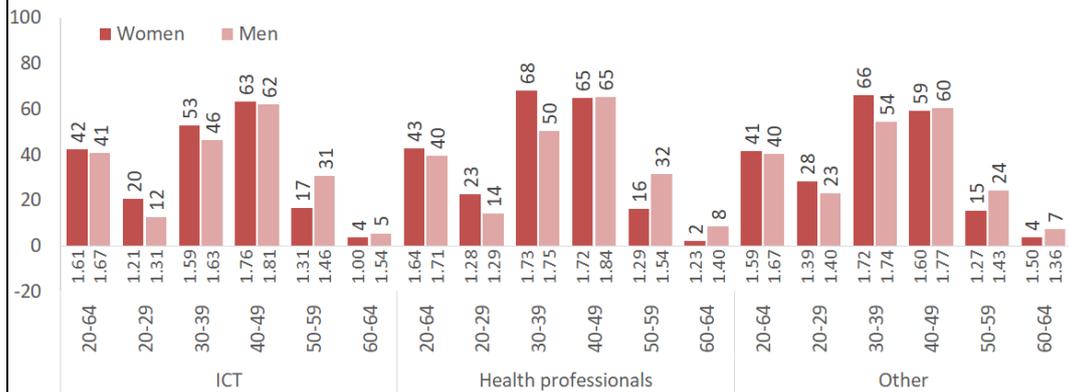
EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance.

## Women in ICT worry about work when not working



EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance.

## What do the numbers on children tell us? ...



EIGE's calculations, EIGE (2018). Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance.

## Concluding thoughts: in parallel to technological change, societal and organisational innovations are needed

- **Gendered expectations of women's limited participation due to (upcoming) family care set numerous current biases in employment**, with implications for the future. Women's earnings drop upon the time of family formation. Men's don't.
- **Unequal sharing of caring roles between women and men is a serious impediment for work-life balance, including ability to have jobs.**
- **Increasing flexibility in working hours** - without a balanced sharing or total work and care hours among women and men - might create even bigger strains for women and negative spill-overs. The extent of flexible working arrangements is foreseen to be on the rise. Still, the part-time and flexi-work is remunerated lower than full-time and "standard" work due to gendered organizational cultures.





## Let's talk

### Connect with us!

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user/eurogender](https://youtube.com/user/eurogender)



Gedimino pr. 16,  
LT-01103 Vilnius,  
Lithuania



## Gender Equality and Work-Life-Balance Policies in Austria

**MANUELA VOLLMANN**

Executive Director ABZ\*AUSTRIA

European Expert Meeting, Berlin

October 1-2, 2018

\* MADE FOR  
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES  
AND GENDER EQUALITY

## ABZ\*AUSTRIA – AN INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Founded 1992, 25 years of experience in gender equality on the labour market and in education
- ▶ 160 employees in five Austrian federal provinces
- ▶ Around 30 projects for over 8,000 women per annum
- ▶ Funded exclusively through projects
- ▶ Contracting authorities are e.g. the Public Employment Service, the ESF, various Austrian federal ministries, city of Vienna
- ▶ Long lasting cooperations with private companies

## CAMPAIGN „REAL MEN DO FIFTY-FIFTY“\*



\*Campaign by the Austrian Federal Minister of Women Helga Konrad, 1995

**ABZ** ★  
**AUSTRIA**

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR WORK- LIFE-BALANCE IN AUSTRIA

Exemplified by

- ▶ The Austrian law on childcare/parental leave
- ▶ Parental part-time & the issue of long-term part-time work
- ▶ Care leave & care part-time



# GENDER EQUALITY & WORK-LIFE-BALANCE IN COMPANIES I

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**ABZ\***  
**AUSTRIA**

- ▶ Work-life-balance is not a „women’s issue“ but a matter of management!
- ▶ Systematic management of parental/educational/care/other leaves
- ▶ ABZ\*AUSTRIA’s digital tool „RoadMap“ provides information & support for managers and employees

## GENDER EQUALITY & WORK-LIFE-BALANCE IN COMPANIES II

- ▶ Paternal leaves promote women's careers
- ▶ Working models aligned with the different phases of life
- ▶ New models of leadership and decision-making

## FIFTY/FIFTY – WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO BE DONE?



- ▶ Part-time jobs for men
- ▶ Long-term paternal leaves
- ▶ Working time reduction
- ▶ Expansion of (all-day) childcare
- ▶ All-day schools

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

Manuela Vollmann  
ABZ\*AUSTRIA  
gf@abzaustria.at  
www.abzaustria.at  
+43 1 6670300

\* MADE FOR  
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES  
AND GENDER EQUALITY



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DE IGUALDAD

INSTITUTO DE LA MUJER  
Y PARA LA IGUALDAD DE OPORTUNIDADES

## Gender Equality and WLB in Spain

**Gender equality instruments and strategies in Europe:  
Objectives and demands with regard to work-life balance  
(national inputs and discussion)**

Berlin, 1 & 2 October 2018

*Ana Lite Mateo  
Senior Adviser*

*Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities*



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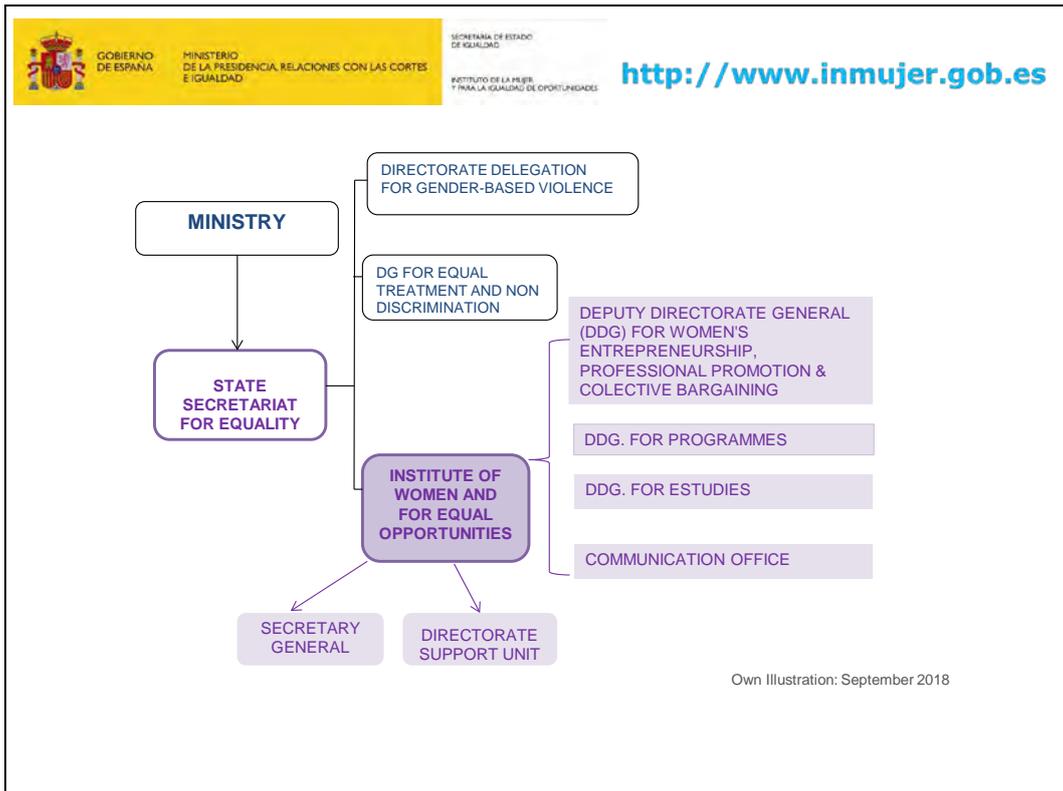
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### THE INSTITUTE OF WOMEN

**Working to support the progress of women in all areas of  
society since 1983**

**Mission:** To promote the equality of women and men in all areas  
of society, by means of well-run programmes, quality services and  
the cooperation of third parties

**It is the equality body** under the EU Gender Equal Treatment  
Directives



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## THE INSTITUTE OF WOMEN

### Functions I

- Study the situation of women in the legal, social, economic, educational, cultural and health fields.
- Gather information, documentation and statistics concerning women.
- Support policy making and monitoring of current legislation.
- Develop initiatives to raise awareness of gender equality.
- Provide and promote training for women and men in matters of equality.
- Develop reports that contribute to eliminate discrimination against women in today's society.



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## THE INSTITUTE OF WOMEN

### Functions II

- Promotes relations between similar institutions at local and regional level, especially through the Sectorial Conference and other cooperation bodies.
- Promote services and programmes to tackle gender inequalities, with a special focus on women belonging to vulnerable groups.
- Receive and channel complaints regarding gender discrimination cases.
- Provide advice services on women's rights and gender discrimination.
- Promote the full participation of women in the Information Society.
- Contribute to recovering and conserving the collective historical memory of women.



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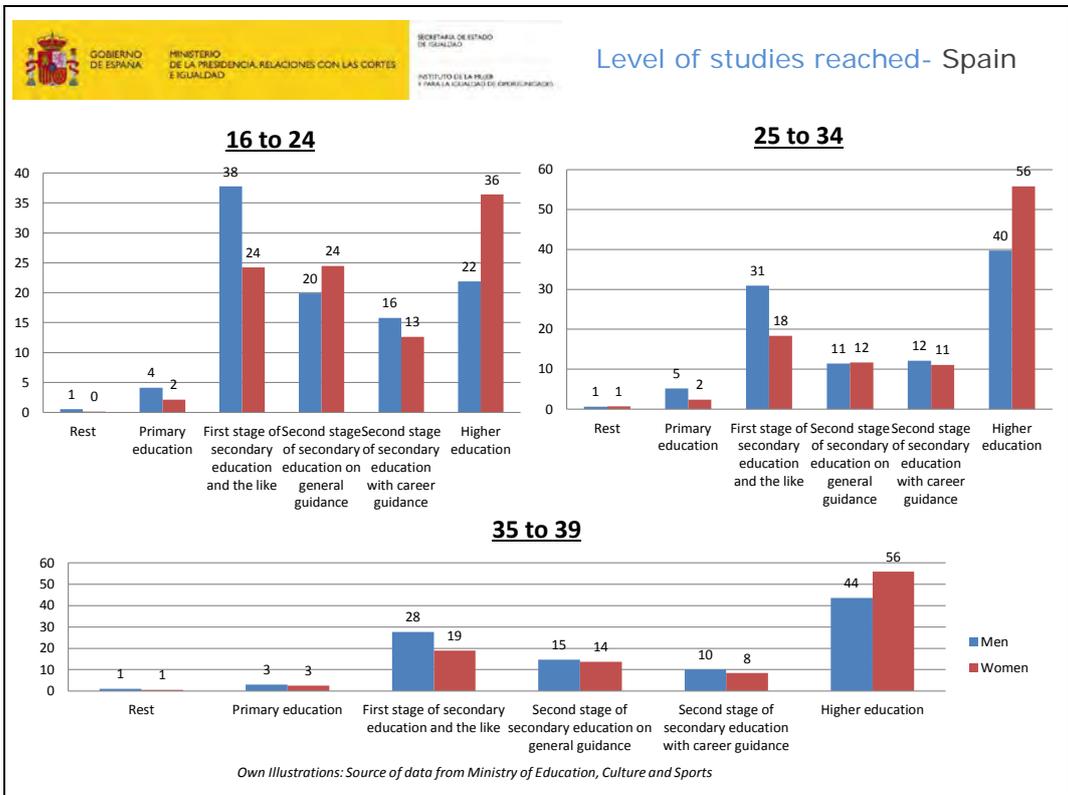
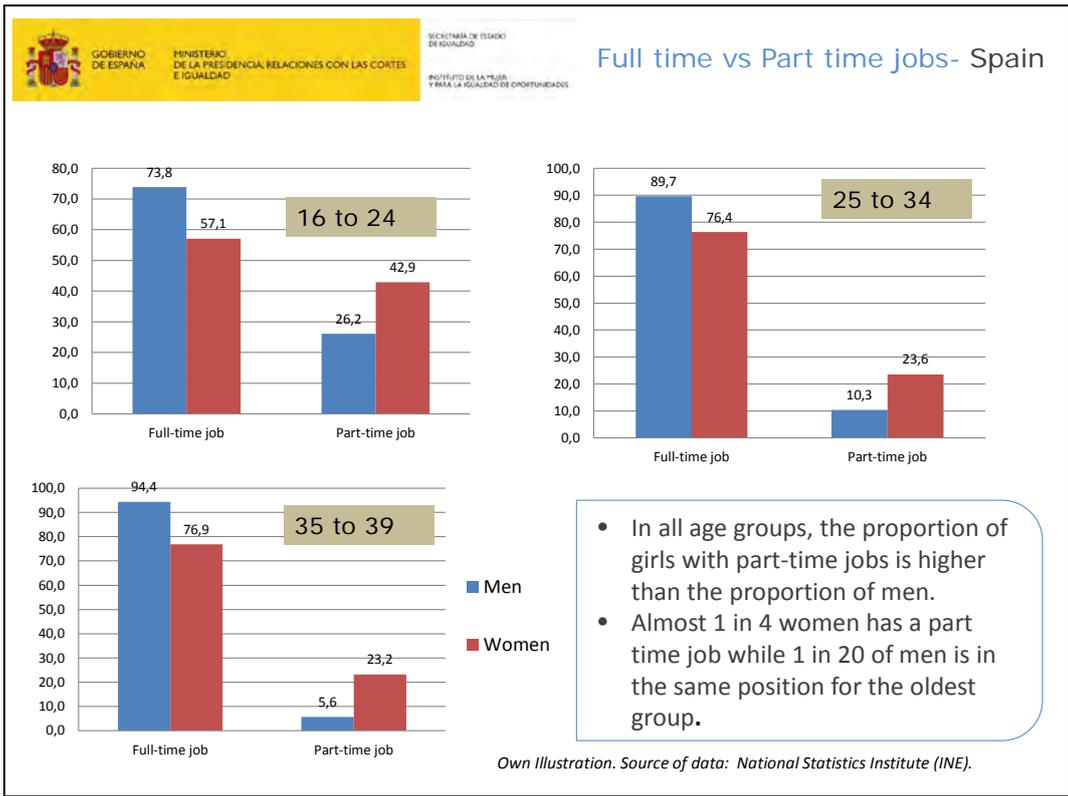
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## Employment - Spain

<b>Females</b>	Activity rate	<b>53,64</b>
	Employment rate	<b>42,17</b>
	Unemployment rate	<b>21,38</b>
<b>Males</b>	Activity rate	65,13
	Employment rate	53,33
	Unemployment rate	18,12
<b>Gender pay gap (Eurostat)</b>		<b>14,2</b>

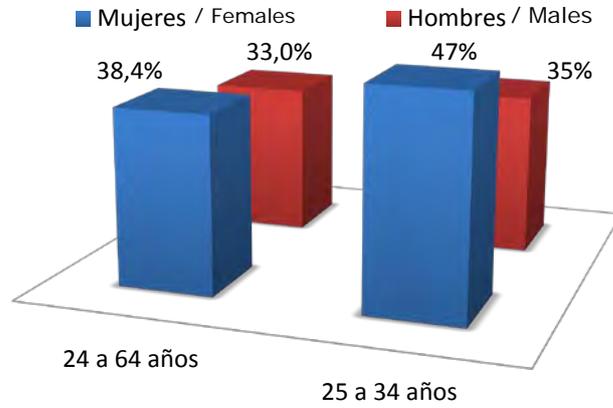
Own illustration: Sources of data from National Statistics Institute (INE) and Eurostat (GPG).





### University graduates - Spain

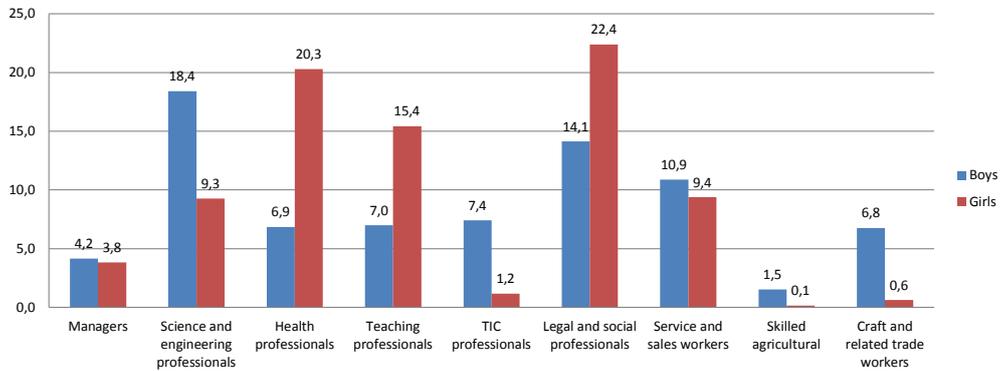
#### University Graduates



Own illustration. Source of data: National Statistics Institute (INE)



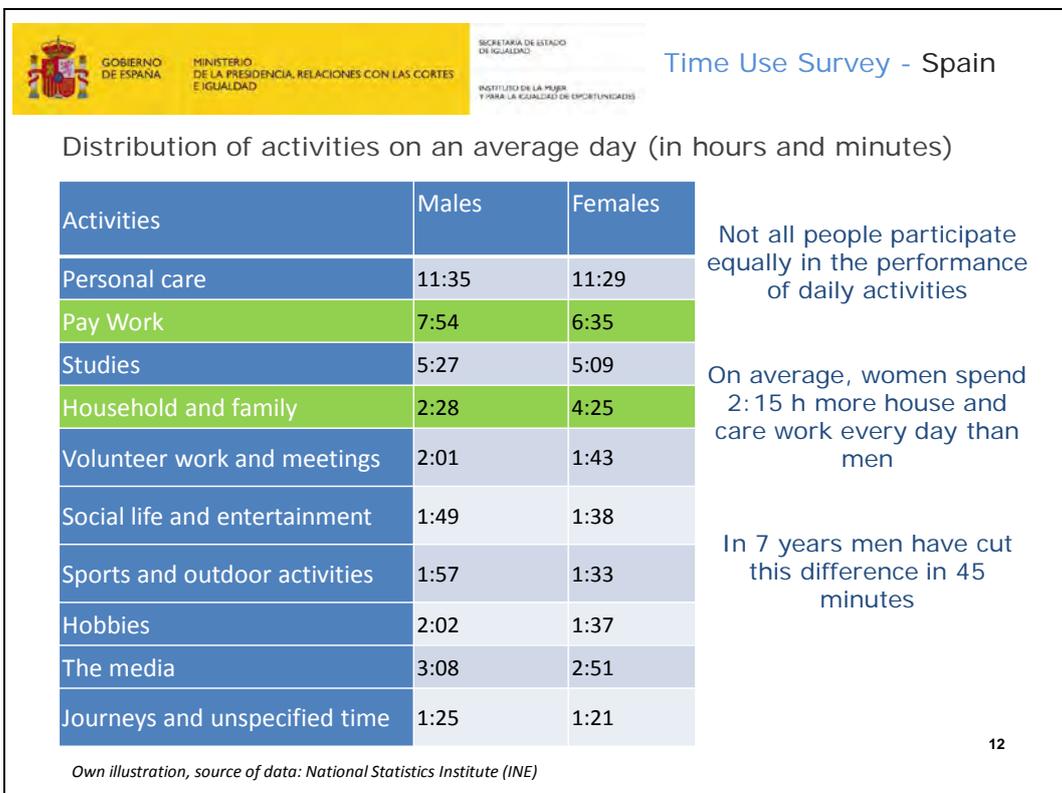
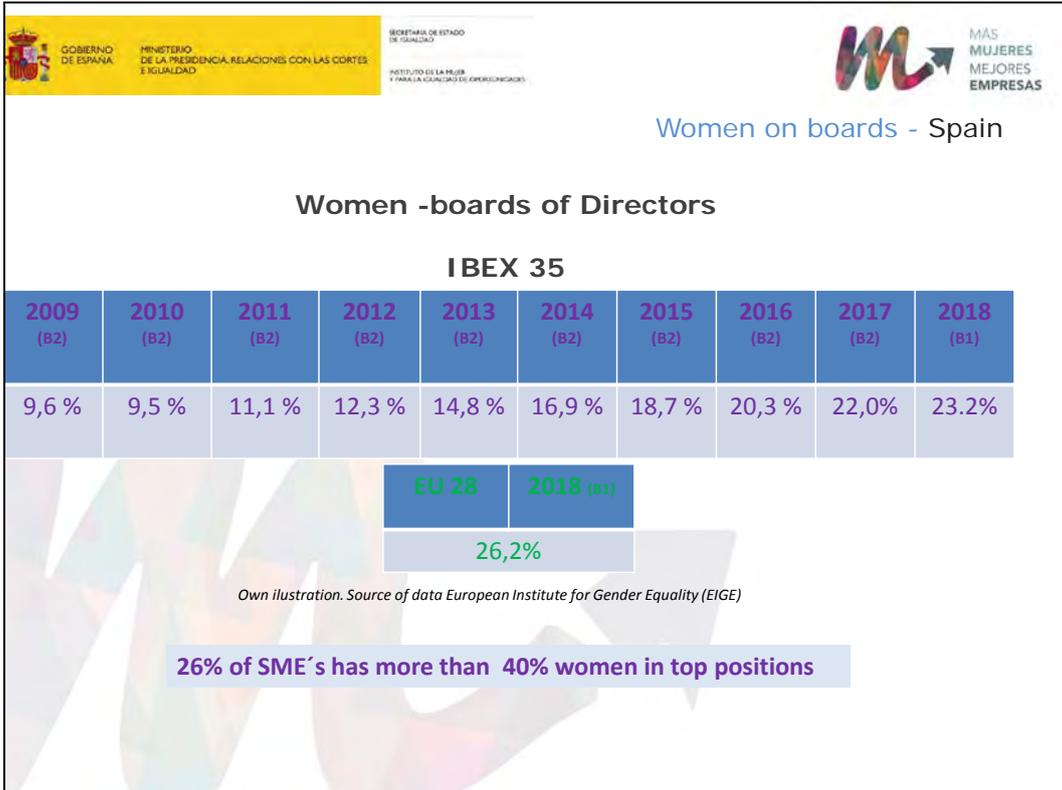
### Occupational expectations - Spain



46,3% of girls are expecting to work in Science professions vs 61,6% of boys

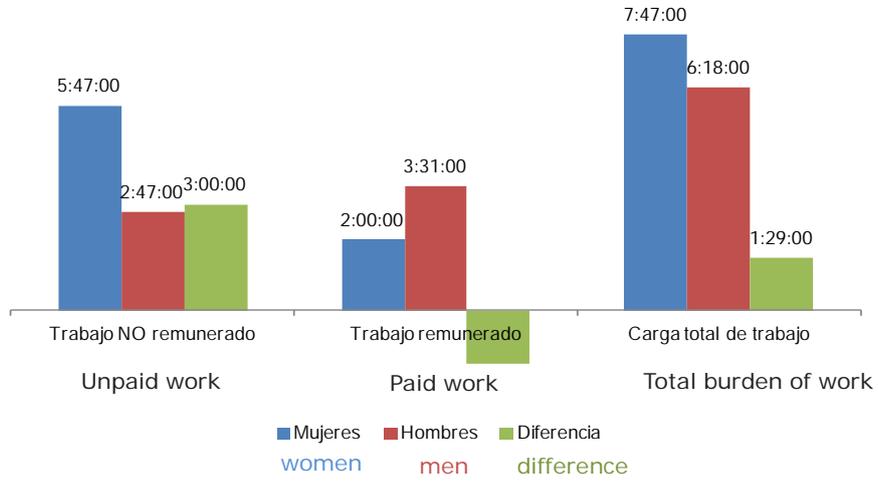
- The main differences in favor of girls choices are in health, education and legal professions.
- For boys, science and engineering with craft and related trade workers show the biggest differences

Own Illustration: Source of data from Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports





Time dedicated to paid and unpaid work - differences between women and men



Own illustration. Source of data: National Statistics Institute (INE)



Maternity & paternity leaves

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>MATERNITY LEAVES</b>	288.842	281.151	278.389	278.509	268.328
<b>MOTHERS</b>	283.923	276.181	273.181	272.821	263.398
<b>FATHERS</b>	4.919	4.912	5.208	5.688	4.930
<b>PATERNITY LEAVES</b>	237.988	235.678	238.806	244.468	264.632

Own illustration. Source of data: Ministry of Work, Migrations and Social Security, July 2018.



### Family and childcare leaves

	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Family Care Leave (FCL)	Childcare Leave (ChL)	FCL	ChL	FCL	ChL	FCL	ChL	FCL	ChL
<b>Women</b>	5.703	26.497	6.923	29.554	7.924	33.779	8.421	37.531	9.398	40.536
<b>Men</b>	989	1.541	1.253	1.881	1.445	2.416	1.599	2.986	1836	3.363
<b>Both</b>	6.692	28.038	8.176	31.435	9.369	36.195	10.020	40.517	11.234	43.899
<b>% Women</b>	85,22	94,50	84,67	94,01	84,57	93,32	84,04	92,63	83,66	92,34

Own Illustration. Source: Ministry of Work, Migrations and Social Security, July 2018.



### Labour rights concerning WLB and working time

- **Maternity leave:** 16 weeks (fully paid).  
 6 weeks compulsory following the birth.  
 Employed mothers have the right to transfer up to 10 of their 16 paid weeks to the father as long as they take the obligatory 6 weeks' leave after giving birth.
- **Paternity leave:** 5 weeks(fully paid), since July 2018.
- **Breastfeeding leave:** paid leave of 1hour a day until the child is nine months old. It can be accumulated and taken all at once.
- **Leave without wage loss for the worker**
- **Working time reduction:** allows for a reduction of between 1/8 to 1/2 of their working time to allow caring of children under 12 (with an equivalent reduction of salary). **Negative impact?**= since, mostly affects women.
- **Parental leave:** Not paid.


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WLB- Spain

## Instruments for a better WLB and working time

- **Regulation & Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities 2018-2021**
- **II Equality Plan for the General Administration**
- **Collective bargaining & businesses equality plans**
- **Other measures, such as:**
  - Remote voting for deputies and senators
  - Public services for care (Childcare + care for dependents)
  - Services for child care in non-stands working hours (nurseries and schools)
  - Collaboration Agreement between The Institute of Women & the FEMP.
  - WLB awareness raising campaigns, etc.


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## Main Barriers for a better WLB and share of household and care

- **Gender stereotypes – Education, socialization and the role of Media**
  - Traditional division of work, household and care activities (*undervalue of care*)
  - Stereotyped perceptions about characteristics associated to men & women
  - Lack of education in GE since early stages
  - Culture of presentism (face-to-face), prejudices in the evaluation of results
- **Insufficient share of household and care responsibilities and accessible care services**
- **Flexible working hours** are widely considered long overdue
- **Flexibility** could make the market more accessible for people with caring responsibilities and for women in particular, but crowd work and new forms of employment not do not guarantee economic independence



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Promote more Equal & non-transferable paid maternity and paternity leaves

WHERE TO GO?

Education, awareness raising and work with the Media

More accessible quality care services for all

Work on the rationalisation of Working Time

Better regulation of new forms of work (gig economy a new forms of employment) & More flexibility along with decent and quality working conditions

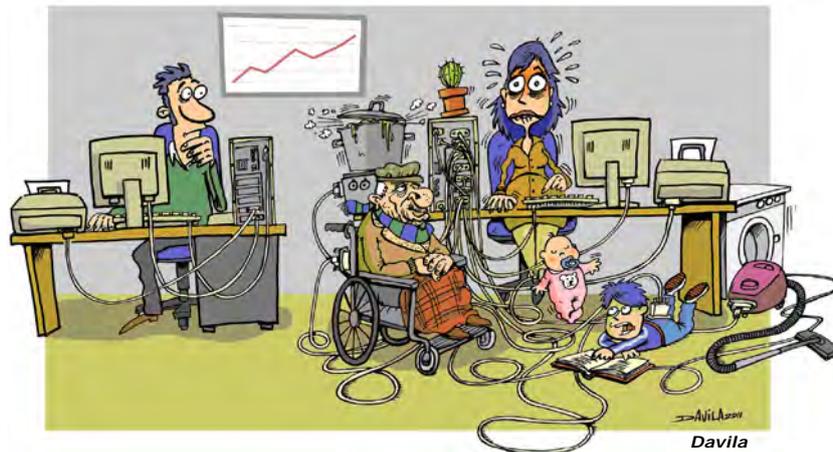


GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO DE LA PRESIDENCIA, RELACIONES CON LAS CORTES E IGUALDAD

SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO DE IGUALDAD

INSTITUTO DE LA MUJER Y PARA LA IGUALDAD DE OPORTUNIDADES



Davila



Cruz Roja

It represents a long history of inequality in the home, of professional discrimination and wage inequalities. This is the reality. It depends on you that we can draw another one. If you want to help us change this reality share this vignette.

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THANK YOU!

[secretaria-sgeie@inmujer.es](mailto:secretaria-sgeie@inmujer.es)

# THE SERVICE VOUCHER SCHEME FOR HOUSEHOLD RELATED SERVICES IN FLANDERS

A brief outline

Dr. Lieve De Lathouwer  
Departement Work and Social economy



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## Combination of 3 goals

objectief	toelichting
A better combination of work and care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initial directed towards couples with children (two working partners)</li><li>• At a reasonable price</li><li>• Increase of older users (staying at home)</li></ul>
Jobcreation for vulnerable groups (low skilled, migrants,..)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Low skilled</li><li>• (long term) unemployed</li><li>• Migrants</li><li>• Inactives</li></ul>
Combating undeclared work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Formal labour relation/Labour contract</li><li>• Decent labour conditions (eg.legal minimum wages) (CAO)</li><li>• Legitimacy fight against black market)</li></ul>



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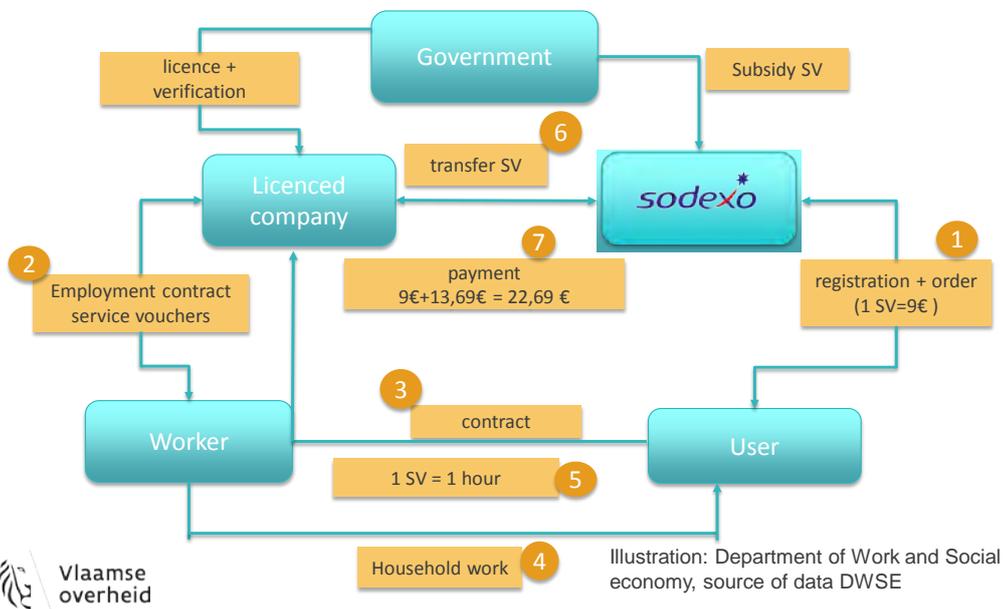
## What?

- a payment instrument
- issued by an issuing company (appointed by government, public procedure)
- that a private person can use to pay for household services
- provided by a licensed company (by government)
- with the financial support of the government in the form of a consumption subsidy

## Authorised household activities

activities around the user's house:	activities outside the user's house:
Cleaning the house (including the windows)	grocery-buying
doing the laundry and ironing	commonly transporting less mobile people
occasionally doing some elementary sewing	ironing involving some occasional sewing
cooking	

## How does the system work?



## Voucher

- Voucher is:
  - provided by issuing company (public procurement for private market)
  - payment licensed companies
- Price for user : gross 9€, net 6,30€ (after tax reduction)
- Validity period :
  - 8 months/user
  - 9 months/company
- Maximum
  - 500 SV/user
  - 1000 SV/family
  - 2000 SV single parent/disabled
- Paper (42%)– Electronic (58%)

## Value of a service voucher



\*tax cut 30% (net cost 6,30 €)

## Results (figures 2016)

*The service voucher scheme is widely accepted by users and workers:*

- **81,8 million** service vouchers
- Provided by **1.473** licensed companies
- among more than **668.000** Flemish users (approx. 25% of all Flemish families)
- **88.334** employed workers (4% of total salaried workers)
  - on a average of 14 hours/month/user (2017)
  - Significant number of users/worker: (excl ironing)(2017)

Number of employers	Number users per month	Number of workers	
		n	%
1 employer	1-5	41.071	45,5
	6-10	36.417	40,4
	11-15	10.062	11,2
	16 +	1.218	1,4
	totaal	88.710	98,5
2 of meer werkgevers		1.398	1,5
<b>totaal</b>		90.108	100%

## Cost for government (2016)

Flemish government	
Subsidy	€1,109 billion
Administration cost	€10.2 million
Cost tax cut	€177.3 million
<b>Total gross-cost</b>	<b>€1,296 billion</b>
return on investment: lower budget unemployment allocations; increase of taxes/social contributions	Estimates 44% (new research under way)
Note: in addition to the subsidies for service vouchers, companies also use other employment measures (like all other companies) when allowed	

## Users

- Private persons for private domestic needs
- Primary residence in Flanders
- Have to register with Sodexo (issuing company) , to purchase service vouchers (9 € = 1 hour)
- They have contract with a recognized company
- They buy service vouchers in exchange for domestic help
  - Activities around the user's house: cleaning the house (windows included), doing the laundry and ironing, cooking
  - Activities outside the user's house: Grocery-buying service, common transport for less mobile people, ironing

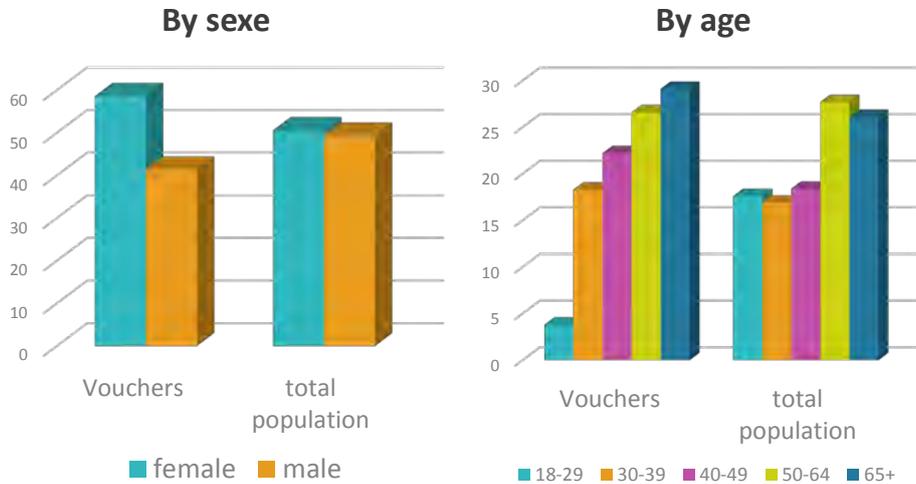
44% are couples with children

21% singles

30% 65+

## Profile of users

Over-representation of female users and of 30-49 olds, nevertheless= 30% of users is 65+



## Household situation of users (fig 2016)

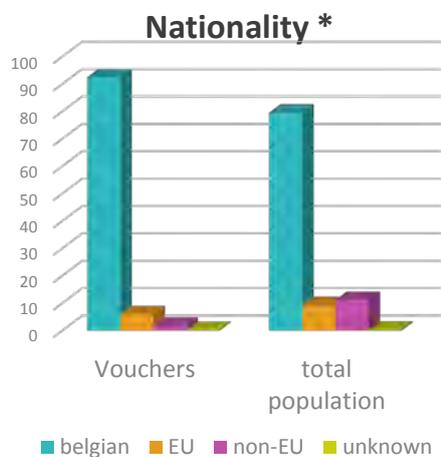
typ_household	Service vouchers	Total population
	%	
Married with children	34,2%	38,2%
Married without children	21,6%	19,6%
Unmarried with children	10,0%	11,3%
Unmarried without children	4,8%	5,3%
One parent family	6,5%	9,2%
Single	21,1%	13,3%
Other households	1,1%	1,7%
Collective household	0,7%	1,3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>100,0%</b>

Motivation to 'outsource' household care varies according to groups (Idea Consult research 2018):

- Reconciling work and family life ('I have no time to do this work'): couples with children/both partners working, higher incomes
- Physical reasons ('I am not able to do this work'): elderly, lower incomes
- Better quality (I lack the know how to do this work'): male singles
- Comfort ("I do not want to do this work'): higher incomes

## Profile of users

Overrepresentation of Belgian users, underrepresentating non EU users



\*Nationality based on current nationality, nationality by birth and nationality by birth of both parents



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Illustration: Department of Work and Social Economy, source of data DWSE

## Companies

- All kind of companies:
  - Commercial companies (e.g. cleaning companies, temporary work agencies)
  - Self-employed putting staff to work
  - Non-profit social economy enterprises
  - Municipalities and local welfare offices
  - Social profit enterprises
  - ...
- Have to obtain a licence from the government (quality control before start)

**46%  
commercial  
firms**

2015-2016:  
**-4,6% exit firms**  
**+2,9% new firms**



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## Workers

- No specific prior requirements
- Not belong to the user's family and not share the user's residence
- Have a "service vouchers employment contract"
- Wage conditions are laid down in sectoral collective bargaining agreements (social partners)

**88.336 workers, of which 18,2% new entries (31/12/2015):**

- 39% previous other job
- 23% social benefit
- 37% non-active

## Profile of workers (2016)

Over-representation of women and of part-time workers



## Profile of workers (2016)

Over-representation of employees of new European countries and from outside EU28; under-representation of youngsters (<30 years)



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\*Nationality based on current nationality, nationality by birth and nationality by birth of both parents

Illustration: Department of Work and Social Economy, source of data DWSE

## Household situation of workers (fig 2016)

type_household	Service vouchers	Total working population
	%	%
Married with children	37,6%	41,6%
Married without children	12,9%	13,0%
Unmarried with children	15,2%	12,8%
Unmarried without children	7,8%	9,4%
One parent family	14,8%	8,4%
Single	9,9%	12,8%
Other households	1,8%	2,0%
Collective household	0,0%	0,1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>100,0%</b>

Illustration: Department of Work and Social Economy, source of data DWSE



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## Social impact of the service voucher scheme

- *Work life balance of the users:*
  - supply of **cheap** personal services, heavily subsidized
  - not only for **active users** in the 'busy life phase', but also of importance for improving the quality of life for **older users (30% of users are 65+)**.
  - Evidence of impact on **labor supply of users** (Idea Consult 2018, 22.000 extra VTE jobs (working more hours, bringing women back on the labor market) --> more reliable research needed
  - Impact on well being (Idea Consult 2018; 85% of users say service vouchers have improved the quality of life)
  - Users come from middle class families ? (income effects ?)

## Social impact of the service voucher scheme

- *Jobcreation:*
  - good working conditions; reasonable pay and social security rights (no rights in black or grey market)
  - activation of unemployed and in particular inactives
  - evidence of increased (part time) employment rate for low skilled women (deadweight losses ?; net job impact ?)
  - Upward mobility: source DWSE

	Before SV scheme (31/12/2013)	After SV scheme 1/03/2015)
In work	35,6	43,8
Social benefit	34,1	38,2
pension	0,4	4,8
Inactive (no income)	30,0	13,2
total	100	100

- Shortage of workers ? (increased demand for competences)
- Is it more cost-effective than other employment measures?

## Social impact of the service voucher scheme

### ■ *Combating undeclared work (black and grey market):*

- no reliable figures available, for Europe estimates EC paper 2012: 1 million in black work in personal & household services
- Belgium: 8% of user households say that they used black market before service vouchers (Idea Consult research, 2018); BUT at the start of the scheme this % should be much higher;
- Creation of new market (highly subsidized)
- Price reasonably? Relation between price and take-up (price elasticity, compared with alternatives):
  - Compared to black market prices?
  - Compared to regular prices in other subsidized services or on private market?

-> Idea Consult research (2018): price is most important reason to use service vouchers (32% in Flanders) + official character of the measure; price elastic model: If price rises demand will go down

## Conclusion and policy reflection

- **innovative instrument:** widely accepted for users and workers with high satisfaction; demand will rise because of further feminisation of the labour market and of ageing of society,
- **good practice:** for other countries and EC commission
- **results:**
  - strengths: combination of better work-life balance and job creation for low skilled while avoiding poverty or income inequality (decent wages and SS). Expensive for public budget but large earn back effects.
  - weakness: limited list of activities, rarely used for flexible needs, the instrument of a voucher (alternative is invoicing or cash), limited profitability of the service companies
- **gender dimension:**
  - users:
    - Work-life balance: 'outsourcing' (often female) household work in exchange for more free time, also for more work for women (effect on labour supply should be better researched)
    - Ageing of population: elderly staying at home/to remain autonomous instead of residential services (other services are needed; increased role for care leaves? 'Daughters' are taken up?)
  - workers:
    - Upward mobility: activation of female unemployed and inactive 'housewives' or 'black workers' into 'female' part time service jobs with good working conditions

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Internet: <http://www.iss-ffm.de>  
E-Mail: [beobachtungsstelle@iss-ffm.de](mailto:beobachtungsstelle@iss-ffm.de)



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## Author

Debora Gärtner: [debora.gaertner@iss-ffm.de](mailto:debora.gaertner@iss-ffm.de)  
Lena Reinschmidt

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