

Manifesto Equalising Care

8 November 2007



Recommendations at European level:

- **European Networks:** Equalising Care is a huge issue that effects all communities and all policies. As the population in all European countries ages, this will be more and more an issue at European level. It is important that we speak with one voice and should start to influence policymakers at all levels and as many as possible regarding improvement of the position of those who provide unpaid care. If we do it all, we can push care to the forefront.
- **European Commission:** To get recognition of unpaid care work at European level and in order to modify all national laws and legislation in such a way that unpaid care work becomes one of the main points, there should be a European directive concerning the rights to reconcile paid work and unpaid care work.
- **Members of European Parliament:** A hearing of MEPs with NGOs should be organised. If MEPs are involved and take part in an early stage, it would be easier to get changes at European and at national level. Best strategy is to start the MEP lobby in their own country. The Equalising Care Network, the EAPN and the EWL should contact MEPs regarding this issue at the same time but from different perspectives.

Recommendations at Trade Union level (European as well as national):

- A lot of work has to be done to convince policymakers within the trade unions to use the PUW-quote. But it is an excellent tool to work with and to show clearly what is going on. Our strategy should be to convince men that it is urgent to look at this or we will all loose the work-family balance.
- To get (members of) trade unions in all European countries ready for a family friendly policy we have to start from the bottom and to engage the top-level as

well. For instance by letting the trade unions of all sectors organising regional conferences aiming at formulating a resolution that is supported by members from different trade unions (at local and regional level). This will not succeed overnight, but no-one can ignore the importance of care anymore.

Recommendations at national level:

- We need new solutions for men and women. The mentality has to change and governments and politicians can play an important role to realise this change.
- Important is what we can do to get men more involved. For instance to get the right to work part-time and to get paid parental leave high on the agenda for men also.
- National governments have to involve equalising care in policies; if not trade unions and NGOs should lobby national governments.
- In every society it is time to decide what to do with our time. If everything is monetarised no space is left for immaterial well being.
- The definition of “necessary care work” is important. This will be the basis of care credits.
- What kind of unpaid care work men and women do, should be made visible and also the effects of the current division of work.
- A system to equalise care should be introduced with care credits based on the number of hours above the social average unpaid care work
- Women who cared unpaid most of their working lives, should get care credits to be able to build a pension. Our research shows that existing care credits or allowances - if available - are very low. This means that governments saves money: it is cheaper than to buy professional care
- Care allowances as well as salaries in the care sector must be higher, this will stimulate women and men to care.