



Gender equality for economic prosperity, or economic prosperity for gender equality?

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Families and gender equality

- COFACE perspective = Families perspective, especially workers with caring responsibilities (from birth to old age).
- Gender equality in the labour market/the economy goes hand in hand with gender equality in the family.
- We advocate for work-life support for women and men, based on access to **resources, services, time** to care. Ensuring they do not have to choose between work and family.
- High employment rate (decent jobs) is good for the economy, using the full potential of the workforce (women and men). Allowing working mothers, fathers, carers to reconcile work and family life increases women's employment, increases well-being, reduces family and child poverty, increases fertility. All things which are good for the economy (OECD)



Gender inequality bad for the economy

- The unequal share of care responsibilities (the gender care gap) in the family decreases (full) women's economic potential and their economic independence.
- Unpaid work is not included in the GDP. Nonetheless, the amount of unpaid work is known to be substantial. Even in the most egalitarian countries in the world like Norway or Sweden, women do at least 20 % more unpaid work than men. Culture, regulations, family-friendly policies matter for reducing and redistributing unpaid work more equally (IMF, 2019)
- In 2016, almost 9 out of 10 mothers in the EU provided daily care for their children, compared to 6 out of 10 fathers. In number of hours, the gender care gap is even more evident: fathers spend an average of 20 hours per week for the care of their children, while mothers dedicate almost twice as much time (Eurofound, 2018)
- In some EU countries, more than 25% of inactive women are inactive because of caring responsibilities (Commission, 2017)
- Conclusion: reducing the gender care gap and boosting gender equality policies would boost the economic system.



How does the economy serve gender equality?

- Reminder: EU economic actions must be based on gender equality values. Charter of Fundamental Rights (articles 23 and 33), TFEU article 153 (i), European Pillar of Social Rights (principle 2)
- Financial system/banks should provide economic investments in family businesses, small and medium-sized companies to generate more employment opportunities for women and men.
- Family-friendly workplaces must understand the needs of working carers, women and men.
- Investments in Work-Life support based on values of co-responsibility in the family (e.g. adequately paid parental leaves for both women and men, care services, boost employment and income).
- Example: OECD promotes investment in early childhood education and care (which is part of Work-Life support mix). Positive for gender equality and for child health/well-being





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