

# European Parliament urges member states to fulfill their goals on childcare [EU] <sup>[1]</sup>

**Source:** European Parliament press release

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 3 Feb 2009

## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

To maintain the principle of intergenerational solidarity, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) urge the Member States to achieve their commitments to introduce by 2010 childcare for 90% of children under the mandatory school age and call for a review of the work-life balance policies in the EU. The report adopted was an alternative motion for a resolution put forward by the Greens/EFA group and adopted with 358 votes in favour, 271 against and 28 abstentions replacing the original report from the Women's Committee.

The concept of intergenerational solidarity relates to childcare and the responsibility for the elderly and dependent. In the EU, the employment rate for women with dependent children is only 62.4% as compared with 91.4% for men.

MEPs urge the Council and the Member States to achieve their commitments, agreed in the Barcelona European Council of 2002 to introduce by 2010 childcare for 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and for at least 33% of children under 3 years old.

The EP calls on the Commission to bring forward a proposal for a new directive regarding specific rights and safeguards in relation to the reconciliation of working and family life where there are dependent children.

In the resolution, MEPs fear that the Czech Presidency's proposal for childcare as a "fully fledged alternative to a professional career" is geared towards the traditional division of labour between men and women, that is to say the traditional concept of a worker being male, available on a full time basis, whose personal needs are taken care of by 'invisible hands' (women) organising the home and the family.

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According to the resolution, the persons who devote their time and skills in the field of intergenerational solidarity should receive social recognition, by giving them individual rights, particularly regarding social security and pensions.

The European Parliament urges the Commission to introduce initiatives which validate skills acquired in carrying out educational tasks, caring for dependent persons and household management so that "these skills are taken into consideration upon re-entry into the labour market". A point highlighted in the initial own-initiative of Anna Záborská (EPP-ED, SK), adopted in the Women's rights committee.

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To promote a balance between family plans and professional ambitions, MEPs insist that steps need to be taken to improve the treatment not just of maternity leave but also paternity and parental leave.

The report calls on the Commission, in collaboration with the Member States and the social partners, to launch a review of work-life balance policies, particularly by "guaranteeing that the cost of maternity is not borne by the employer, but by the public purse", and by improving accessibility to care and assistance services for children, people with disabilities and the elderly.

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- reprinted from European Parliament

**Related link:** Quality in early learning and child care services: Papers from the European Commission Childcare Network <sup>[2]</sup>

**Region:** Europe <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** quality <sup>[4]</sup>

federalism <sup>[5]</sup>

gender <sup>[6]</sup>

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/09/02/european-parliament-urges-member-states-fulfill-their-goals> [2] <http://childcarecanada.org/publications/other-publications/04/10/quality-early-learning-and-child-care-services-papers-european> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/quality> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/federalism> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/gender>