

EU-Japan Contact
Group

Balance between Family and Working Life as a Pre- condition for a Demographic Restoration of the Society



*Erika Koller
Member of EESC
Group II*

Aging Society



Proportion of people aged 65 or over in the population will rise from 17.1% in 2008 to 30% in 2060.

The average ratio between people of working age (15-64) and people aged 65 and over will change from 4:1 now to 2:1 in 2050.

Moreover, there is **a fall in the birth rate.**



Aging society + a fall in the
birth rate



Lack of labour force

3

Lack of Labour Force

Solutions:

Migrant workers – doesn't solve the problem

Women have to take part in the labour
market



Consensus at EU Level on the Importance of Policies Promoting Work-life Balance

The issue of care and reconciliation of private and professional life has been on the European political agenda since 2006



Consultations with the social partners



History of the Debate

- EU agenda since the 1980s focused mainly on how women can combine a career and family responsibilities
- During the 1990s, steps were taken towards forming an agenda of reconciliation of work and family life
- Today the issue appears to be high on the agenda of the EU institutions and the social partners



Reconciliation of Family and Work

European focus on labour market and family needs

Research activities:

- Eurofound: Reconciliation of work and family life and collective bargaining in the European Union
- OECD (Babies and Bosses)



Issues to be Tackled

- Special leave and career breaks: this may include educational leave, career breaks, maternity leave, parental leave and bereavement leave;
- Part-time working: part-time hours of work may be arranged to suit both the employer and the employee;
- Flexitime: this enables workers to adjust or personalise their working time;



- Compressed working week: the employee works the full number of hours on a reduced number of days a week, for example 38 hours over a four-day week;

- Job sharing: this allows two or more workers to share one full-time position;

- Homeworking or teleworking: this permits workers to balance their work and home commitments and cuts out the difficulties associated with commuting;



- Childcare support: the provision of childcare centres is crucial for working parents;



- Term-time working: this is potentially very useful for parents who cannot find adequate childcare during school holidays;

- Annualised hours schemes.



HOLIDAY
COMING SOON



European Employment Strategy – Main Stages

- 1. Working time, new forms of work organisation**
- 2. Parental leave**
- 3. Day-care of children**
- 4. Pregnant workers**
- 5. Reconciliation of work and family life**



1. Working time, new forms of work organisation

- Council Directive 93/104/EC on the organisation of working time
- Atypical employment, in the mid-1990s, as an opportunity to create new employment
- Framework agreement and EC directive on part-time work (1997)
- Framework agreement on fixed-term employment contracts (1999)



- Extension of working time directive (2000)
- Recent inter-sectoral social dialogue on new forms of work and specifically on teleworking
- Teleworking agreement (2002)
- Temporary agency work (2002)
- Working time directives: Directives 93/104/EC and 2000/34/EC



2. Parental leave

- **EU parental leave agreement and directive**

The directive on equal treatment for men and women, amending the 1976 directive, was adopted in 2002 and includes, among other provisions, employment safeguards for new parents of either sex who are seeking leave to look after infants.



3. Day-care of children

EU childcare policy

- Lisbon Strategy, Barcelona Targets (2002): by 2010, Member States should provide childcare to at least 90% of children between three years old and the mandatory school age, and to at least 33% of children under three years of age
- Only some countries achieved, e.g. Sweden
- New Lisbon Strategy aims at 90% under 3 years of age, 100% before school age
- No provision for after school care, holidays, weekends



4. Pregnant workers

- Council Directive (92/85/EEC) on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding
- The new directive is under discussion in the EU Parliament due to the recommendation of ILO on extension of maternity leave from 14 weeks up to... (18, 20, 24 weeks?)
- 24 weeks suggested by social partners and European Social Platform according to WHO recommendations on exclusive breastfeeding in the first 6 months of life.



5. Reconciliation of work and family life

- It was one of the main issues under the Portuguese Presidency (in 2000)
- As a follow-up of Beijing+5 (1995 UN World Conference on Women in Beijing) the French Presidency developed a set of indicators on reconciliation, like flexible working schemes, parental and other forms of leave, care services opening hours etc.



European Council Guidelines for Member States

- design, implement and promote family-friendly policies, including affordable, accessible and high-quality care
- services for children and other dependants, as well as parental and other leave schemes;



- consider setting a national target, in accordance with their national situation, for increasing the availability of care services for children and other dependants;
- give specific attention to women and men considering a return to the paid workforce after an absence and, to that end,
- they will examine the means of gradually eliminating the obstacles to such return.



Retirement and working longer

...

- Working longer... retiring later...
- Working after retirement
- Burden on older people to take care of grandchildren and, or ill or disabled family members
- Active ageing



EESC Opinions Related to this Topic

- The role of the social partners in reconciling working, family and private life (2007)

[http://eescopinions.eesc.europa.eu/EESCopinionDocument.aspx?identifier=ces%20soc%20271%20ces998-2007_ac.doc&language=EN]

- Promoting solidarity between the generations (2007)

[http://eescopinions.eesc.europa.eu/EESCopinionDocument.aspx?identifier=ces%20soc%20277%20ces1711-2007_ac.doc&language=EN]



- Pay gap between women and men (2008)

[http://eescopinions.eesc.europa.eu/EESCopinionDocument.aspx?identifier=ces%20soc%20284%20ces768-2008_ac.doc&language=EN]

- Promoting the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (2009)

[http://eescopinions.eesc.europa.eu/EESCopinionDocument.aspx?identifier=ces%20soc%20329%20ces882-2009_ac.doc&language=EN]



- **Early childhood care and education (2010)**

[http://eescopinions.eesc.europa.eu/EESCopinionDocument.aspx?identifier=ces%20soc%20358%20ces102-2010_ac.doc&language=EN]

- **The roadmap for equality between women and men (2006-2010) and follow-up strategy (2010)**

[http://eescopinions.eesc.europa.eu/EESCopinionDocument.aspx?identifier=ces%20soc%20350%20ces448-2010_ac.doc&language=EN]



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION!**

