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Best interests of the child and policies to ensure a work-life balance

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Ms Françoise HETTO-GAASCH and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

To ensure a better work-life balance, States have put in place various mechanisms such as parental leave, flexible working hours and places, and unpaid leave for family reasons. At the same time, a whole range of child care arrangements for young children and schoolchildren, who may be looked after before and after class, enable parents to better balance work with the need to take care of their children.

These policies make it possible to meet parents' needs and, in turn, those of companies while fostering children's social and emotional development. However, steps should be taken to ensure that such policies respect the best interests of the child. Quality institutional management is essential to ensure the healthy development of the child, which requires significant public investments in childcare facilities, a sufficient number of qualified staff and sound child protection policies. Moreover, it is crucial for children, especially in the early years, to establish a stable and reassuring bond with their parents. This means appropriate measures need to be introduced to enable both parents to spend time with their children and be jointly involved in their upbringing.

Given the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2016-2021, and in particular in order to ensure equal opportunities for all children – which is one of the strategy's priorities – the Parliamentary Assembly should assess whether policies for promoting a work-life balance are implemented in a way that respects the best interests of the child, and identify potential good practices in this regard in member States.

Signed (see overleaf)



Signed¹:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC: European Conservatives Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left