Parliamentary Assembly
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Equal share of unpaid care work between women and men: a pre-condition to achieving gender equality

Motion for a resolution
tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

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

Women continue to carry out a disproportionate share of unpaid care work, including childcare, household chores and care of sick and older relatives, which has a direct impact on their access to the labour market, to decision-making positions and other opportunities. The unequal sharing of unpaid care work is a key structural obstacle that slows down progress and prevents the full realisation of gender equality and women's rights.

In its Resolution 1921 (2013) "Gender equality, reconciliation of private and working life and co-responsibility", the Parliamentary Assembly called on member States to offer adequate services for dependants (children and elderly persons) and to introduce a parental leave scheme enabling both parents to look after their children on an equal footing, among other measures.

The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029 underlines the need to recognise the value of unpaid care activities. Under the Strategy's Objective 4, the Council of Europe calls on member States to encourage more men to take on unpaid care and domestic responsibilities and to make use of flexible working arrangements and other family-friendly measures.

Assembly Resolution 2589 (2025) "Women in the economy: employment, entrepreneurship and gender-responsive budgeting" highlights that "the caregiving responsibilities that women predominantly assume and for which they are seen as indispensable, tend to raise doubts about their perceived ability to perform efficiently within the economic sphere". The removal of obstacles to women's participation in the labour market and the promotion of their economic independence and a more equal sharing of care responsibilities should be addressed without delay.

The Assembly should tackle the issue of shared care responsibilities and make concrete recommendations on how to redress this unbalance, to finally achieve full and effective gender equality.