The Pension Adequacy Report 2021\(^1\) underlined the persistent large gender pension gap, which also contributes to a high risk of poverty among older women. As the report shows, the gap has its main roots in career inequalities in pay, career duration, work intensity and care breaks, which cumulate progressively into a large pension gap. Advances in women’s education and employment reduce the gap, but this process is slow. Pension credits for time spent in care-giving also help reduce the gap provided they are not a disincentive for women to re-enter the labour market, whereas effective and affordable health and long-term care go a long way to maintain adequate living standards among older women. The Commission supports national efforts to accelerate the closing of the gap. The Commission promotes mutual learning, exchange of practices and research in relevant labour market and pension policy measures.

Furthermore, the EU has been supporting Member States in ensuring better sharing of caring responsibilities and targeting higher employment levels among women. This was via the launch of the work-life balance initiative\(^2\) and the adoption of Directive 2019/1158\(^3\), aiming to improve families’ access to family leave and flexible work arrangements and addressing women underrepresentation on the labour market.

Finally, in September 2022 the Commission will put forward a European Care Strategy that aims to improve provision of care services and thus increase women’s labour market participation and help close gender pay and pension gaps.

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\(^3\) [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32019L1158](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32019L1158)