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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

PROMOTING SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE GENERATIONS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Through its Green Paper *Confronting demographic change* published in March 2005, the Commission initiated a debate on the need to strengthen solidarity between the generations. In its Communication of 12 October 2006 on the demographic future of Europe[1], it then emphasised the need for the Member States of the European Union to promote demographic renewal, linking their action to the renewed Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs and following up gender equality policy. By improving family life conditions, particularly by balancing professional and private life, Member States could help Europeans to have their ideal number of children (see Annex 2).

The debate which then started in Europe on the subject of demographic ageing has added to this perspective. It has become clear that the balance in European societies rests on a set of inter-generational solidarity relationships which are more complex than in the past. Young adults live under their parents' roof for longer, while, increasingly often, the parents have to support dependent elderly people[2]. The resulting burdens are borne mainly by the young or intermediate generations, and generally by women. Equality between men and women, and equal opportunities more generally, would therefore appear to be key conditions for the establishing of a new solidarity relationship between the generations.

This is why, even if family policies are the exclusive responsibility of the Member States, the Union can still contribute indirectly to their modernisation and success, particularly on the basis of the Lisbon Strategy, which puts the emphasis precisely on the participation of women in employment, the need to do more in terms of balancing professional life, family life and private life, and the employment and inclusion of young people.

With this in mind, the Commission welcomes the initiative for a European Alliance for Families announced by the Spring European Council. Starting with a description of recent trends in national policies supporting family life, this Communication emphasises the contribution of the Lisbon Strategy to these developments (section 2) before proposing instruments to allow the European Alliance to develop as a platform for research and exchanges (section 3). It constitutes the first stage in a European response to the challenges laid down by demographic change.

2. PUBLIC POLICIES IN SUPPORT OF FAMILY LIFE: THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Member States are committed to adapting their policies in support of family life to take account of demographic ageing, changes in living conditions and the growing diversity in family relationships[3]. Although the responsibility for family policies remains with the Member States, the European Union's policies on employment and equal opportunities nevertheless have a substantial impact on the quality of family life.

2.1. A general movement towards adaptation of family policies by the Member States

European observation tools such as MISSOC suggest that the various policies in support of family life in the Member States of the European Union currently comprise three main axes:

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1 *The demographic future of Europe — from challenge to opportunity* - COM(2006) 571.

2 First European Quality of Life Survey 2003. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

3 Social Situation Report 2005/6.

– compensation for direct and indirect costs associated with the family (benefits or tax relief for those responsible for children or other dependent persons);

– parent help services in the form of education and care for young children, care and supervision for older children and, increasingly, services for dependent people in an ageing society;

– organisation of working and employment conditions (appropriate work schedules and leave) and access to services at local level.

These three axes have developed very differently from one Member State to another. For example, expenditure on family benefits and childcare services averages 2.1% of GDP in the Union (EU-25)[4], but varies between 0.7% and 3.9% depending on the country, with lower levels in the southern European countries (which tend to rely particularly on solidarity within the family) and higher levels in the Nordic and continental countries.

However, taking account of a rapidly developing social and cultural context, Member States have started to adapt, moving in three directions:

– Family policies are now part of a broader set of public measures which all have an influence on family situations, notably policies in the fields of education, social and occupational inclusion of young people, employment, housing, transport, health and, of course, civil law, which governs people's obligations to the other members of their family.

– How action is taken is changing, with a trend towards the decentralisation of activities, individualisation of rights and benefits, and targeting of expenditure to increase the incentive to work and ensure a lasting escape from poverty situations. This trend manifests itself notably in a revision of derived rights linked to the family status and the promotion of individual rights in social protection systems. These systems are also being adapted so as not to penalise women (whose rate of occupational activity in the past has been low) and thus avoid a further deterioration in the poverty situation affecting women in the older generations[5].

– Finally, family policies are increasingly taking account of the changes in aspirations and practices concerning the respective roles of men and women in society, in terms of women participating in employment without major interruptions and men's increased participation in family and domestic responsibilities, thus contributing to equality between men and women through the economic autonomy of the latter.

These trends are welcomed by Europeans, who remain deeply attached to family life[6]. One study carried out by the Robert Bosch Foundation in 12 countries between 1999 and 2003 found that the main wish was for a more extensive range of collectively provided care services for children and dependent people, particularly elderly people (see Annex 7).

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4 Data on expenditure for families do not include tax benefits, expenditure on education (especially pre-school), or other measures intended to help families or to take account of family burdens (housing, social inclusion, etc.).

5 ILO report on women and social security 1988.

6 Eurobarometer 273 "European Social Reality": family life is one of the values highlighted by Europeans when responding to surveys on well-being.

2.2. The importance of promoting employment and equal opportunities

A question that is often asked is how to identify the most efficient family policies. The reply must take account of the variety of objectives assigned to these policies by the countries of Europe. Sometimes, the priority is to increase the number of births by helping couples to achieve their family plans. In other countries, support for family life is part of a general project to promote citizens' well-being by ensuring equal opportunities for all. Some countries see measures to combat poverty among certain families or reduce income inequalities as the main issue. Finally, often at the level of a region or municipal area, the aim is to create a framework conducive to family life with a view to attracting or retaining skilled labour.

However, an empirical comparison shows that the countries which have implemented global policies to promote equality between women and men, have developed integrated systems for the supply of services and individual entitlement to parental leave for both men and women, have invested in the quality of childcare services[7] and have moved towards the more flexible organisation of working time generally have both high birth rates and high levels of female employment. Promoted by a great range of stakeholders, these initiatives in the Member States bring together government, local and regional authorities and social partners, sometimes under the heading of corporate social responsibility, in conjunction with associations and civil society organisations.

The Scandinavian countries have the highest rates of female employment. In Sweden and Denmark more than 80% of women aged 25–54 have a job. The lowest rates are observed in the Mediterranean countries. Fertility rates are also above average in the countries which at a very early stage developed policies to balance professional and family life to the benefit of gender equality.

Arrangements designed to improve the balance between professional and family/private life mean that women do not have to choose between a career and the quality of their family life and contribute thus both to the realisation of family plans and the employment of women. Similarly, reducing pay disparities between men and women also play a role in encouraging the fairer sharing of family and domestic responsibilities.

2.3. The role of European Union employment and equal opportunities policies in the quality of family life

Family policies are the exclusive responsibility of the Member States. However, the European Union has always endeavoured to take account of the impact of its own policies on family relationships and family members' quality of life. The Lisbon Strategy now offers a framework for the modernisation of family policies through the promotion of equal opportunities and in particular through a better reconciliation of work and private/family life which contributes to female labour force participation.

Community legislation has long taken account of the requirements of family life and corresponding rights. Its implementation concerning the freedom of movement for people and workers in Europe has led to the coordination of statutory social security schemes[8] (which include family benefits) and the right to family reunification for workers in the European

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[7] The OECD work on awakening awareness in and educating young children shows that the development of structures combining care and education is becoming a necessity that transcends its contribution to balancing family and professional life, as it contributes to combating exclusion and boosting the promotion of human capital from a very young age.

[8] Communication from the Commission — *Free movement of workers: achieving the full benefits and potential* - COM(2002) 694.

Union, including immigrants from third countries, with own rights for spouses and children[9]. More recently, the European Union's concern for children has led to the introduction of measures to ensure children's rights to a family and protection[10] (including, in particular, rights in terms of protection of the image, programmes to prevent violence against children, measures to provide them with a safe environment, etc.).

In order to ensure equal access to employment for women and men, the balancing of family, private and professional life has become a major thrust of European employment policies. Since 1992 the Community *acquis* has included a legislative framework for the protection of pregnant workers and the provision of maternity leave[11]. Similarly, one of the first results of the European social dialogue was the introduction of a parental leave entitlement[12]. The importance of achieving this balance — essential for the economic independence of women and equality between men and women — is now reflected by the Commission's "Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006–2010"[13] and the European Pact for Gender Equality[14] approved by the Member States at the European Council on 23–24 March 2006.

2.4. The Lisbon Strategy, the driving force for balancing professional, family and private life

With a view to raising female participation in employment, the balancing of professional, family and private life is an integral part of the Lisbon Strategy. This is expressed particularly in the childcare targets adopted by the European Council in 2002. It is also reflected in the integrated guidelines for employment and growth adopted in 2005, which include an approach geared to the life-cycle, meaning that employment policies should better reflect changing family life conditions throughout a person's lifetime. Finally, the Open Method of Coordination in the fields of social protection and social inclusion developed under the Lisbon Strategy devotes special attention to improving the situation of poor children and their families, the modernisation of pension schemes to take more account of new forms of work and career breaks, and long-term care for dependent people. The equal opportunities perspective thus nurtures the development of the Lisbon Strategy, as will be emphasised by several initiatives to be launched in 2007 and 2008:

- In parallel to this Communication, the Commission will launch a second phase of consultation of the social partners, asking for their opinions on the content of possible legislative and non-legislative proposals designed to help achieve a better balance.
- A series of measures will be implemented throughout 2007 in order to comply with the mandate from the European Council, which on several occasions has called on the European Union and its Member States to place special emphasis on tackling child poverty.

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9 Council Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification. Council Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States.

10 *Towards an EU strategy on the rights of the child* - COM(2006) 367.

11 Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 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 (10th individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC).

12 Council Directive 96/34/EC of 3 June 1996 on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC.

13 SEC(2006) 275, 1.3.2006.

14 Presidency conclusions, 7775/1/06/ REV 1.

- The Commission will give thought to the quality of services for elderly dependent people and protection against ill-treatment, as well as measures which could be taken at European level, in cooperation with the Member States, to speed up the development and modernisation of infrastructures and services needed to contend with demographic ageing.
- The ongoing consultation intended to shed more light on social reality on European societies[15] will provide new information which can help shape the approach of the responses which Community policies will be able to provide to requirements in terms of equal opportunities and access for all generations to care services.

Every two years, on the basis of the national reports produced in connection with the Lisbon Strategy, the European Commission's Annual Progress Report will devote a chapter on the Union's state of preparedness in the face of demographic challenges[16].

3. EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR FAMILIES

The European Alliance for Families, launched by the Spring European Council, will first of all take the form of a platform for exchanges and knowledge concerning pro-family policies and best practices in the Member States, with a view to meeting the challenges of demographic change. In order to establish this platform the Commission, starting in 2007, will develop tools to facilitate the systematic exchange of best practices and research (section 3.1).

Through the European Alliance for Families, the Commission intends to foster extensive cooperation and partnership between all stakeholders in order to achieve a better balancing of professional, family and private life. Going beyond the initiatives taken by the social partners at European Union level, the Commission is calling on Member States to develop partnerships with a view to facilitating the balancing of professional, family and private life, making use of new resources made available by the Structural Funds (section 3.2).

At the third European Demographic Forum scheduled for 2010, the Commission will report on what the European Alliance for Families has achieved.

3.1. A platform for the systematic exchange of best practices and research

Given the wide variety of family policies, the European Union offers an excellent forum for the exchange of best practices in the field of public policy and for an in-depth examination of their impacts. In this connection the Commission will establish:

(a) A high-level group of government experts on demographic issues

In parallel to this Communication, the Commission is setting up the high-level group of government experts on demographic issues envisaged by the Communication on the demographic future of Europe. The group's task is to advise the Commission on the preparation of reports and of the Demographic Forum (to be held every two years) and to assist with analyses and exchanges of experience as described below.

(b) European, national, regional and local forums and networks

Every two years, a European Demographic Forum will be organised by the Commission to take stock of the demographic situation and implementation of the orientations proposed by the Communication on the demographic future of Europe. The first forum was held in October 2006, and the next is scheduled for autumn

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15 *Social Reality Stocktaking* - COM(2007) 63.

16 See COM(2006) 571.

2008. Forums will be encouraged and supported at national, regional or local levels. The "Regions for economic change" initiative[17] makes explicit provision for the possibility of actively supporting measures in this field at regional and local levels.

(c) An observatory of best practices

The Commission will invite the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions to set up an observatory of best family policy practices. The information collected by the observatory will provide basic material for the European and decentralised forums.

(d) Research tools

The 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development makes it possible to continue to support research on questions relating to demography and families by providing funding for specific activities in this field and horizontal funding to take account of all the effects of demographic change on social structures. This Framework Programme, as well as the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme, can also help families by mobilising information and communication technologies for enhancing the autonomy and quality of life of older people.

The Commission will also cooperate on the development of the OECD's family database and will work on family policy analysis tools with a view to making them available to the Member States so that they can assess the efficiency of their policies in the light of the overall goals (families having their desired number of children, gender equality and, more broadly, equal opportunities and social inclusion, especially for children). A Eurobarometer survey on family situations and needs will be carried out in 2008.

3.2. Utilisation of the European Structural Funds

As demonstrated by the experience of the EQUAL programme[18] and the conference organised by the European Commission in January 2007 on initiatives by regions to meet the demographic challenge, a large number of existing pilot experiments can inspire the implementation of new national or local activities to support equal opportunities and the balancing of professional and family life. The Community strategic guidelines on cohesion 2007–2013[19] recommend such innovations, to the extent that they aim at adaptation to demographic change[20]. The Commission therefore calls on the Member States to ensure that the operational programmes they have submitted can support such activities. To this end, it will prepare a practical guide for local and regional stakeholders with assistance from the above-mentioned group of government experts, in order to help Member States to implement in practice the measures they have decided on in order to foster the balancing of professional, family and private life and improve the quality of life. Such

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17 Communication from the Commission *Regions for economic change* - COM (2006) 675, 8.11.2006.

18 Reports on activities financed by the European Social Fund relating to the balancing of professional life and family life in order to promote gender equality, particularly in the context of the transnational programme EQUAL, can be consulted on the European Commission's website.

19 *Proposal for a Council Decision on Community strategic guidelines on cohesion* - COM(2006) 386.

20 Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 of 5 July 2006 on the European Social Fund includes the objective of "tackling the relevant dimensions and consequences of demographic changes n the active population of the Community".

decentralised activities will be the subject of a debate at the next European Demographic Forum.

4. CONCLUSIONS

National family policies will strengthen solidarity between generations by encouraging a better response to the needs of families as regards childcare and dependency care and a more balanced distribution of family and domestic responsibilities. The anticipated outcome is a better quality of life for all, as well as a situation which is more conducive to the fulfilment of family plans. The new orientations for family policies will also contribute to growth and employment, notably by facilitating female labour force participation.

Through the emphasis placed on equality between men and women and equal opportunities more generally, the Lisbon Strategy constitutes a suitable framework of support for the development of national family policies. However, the main responsibilities lie with the Member States. Through the European Alliance for Families, whose exchange arrangements and research project are wholeheartedly encouraged by the Commission, this modernisation is becoming an issue of common interest.

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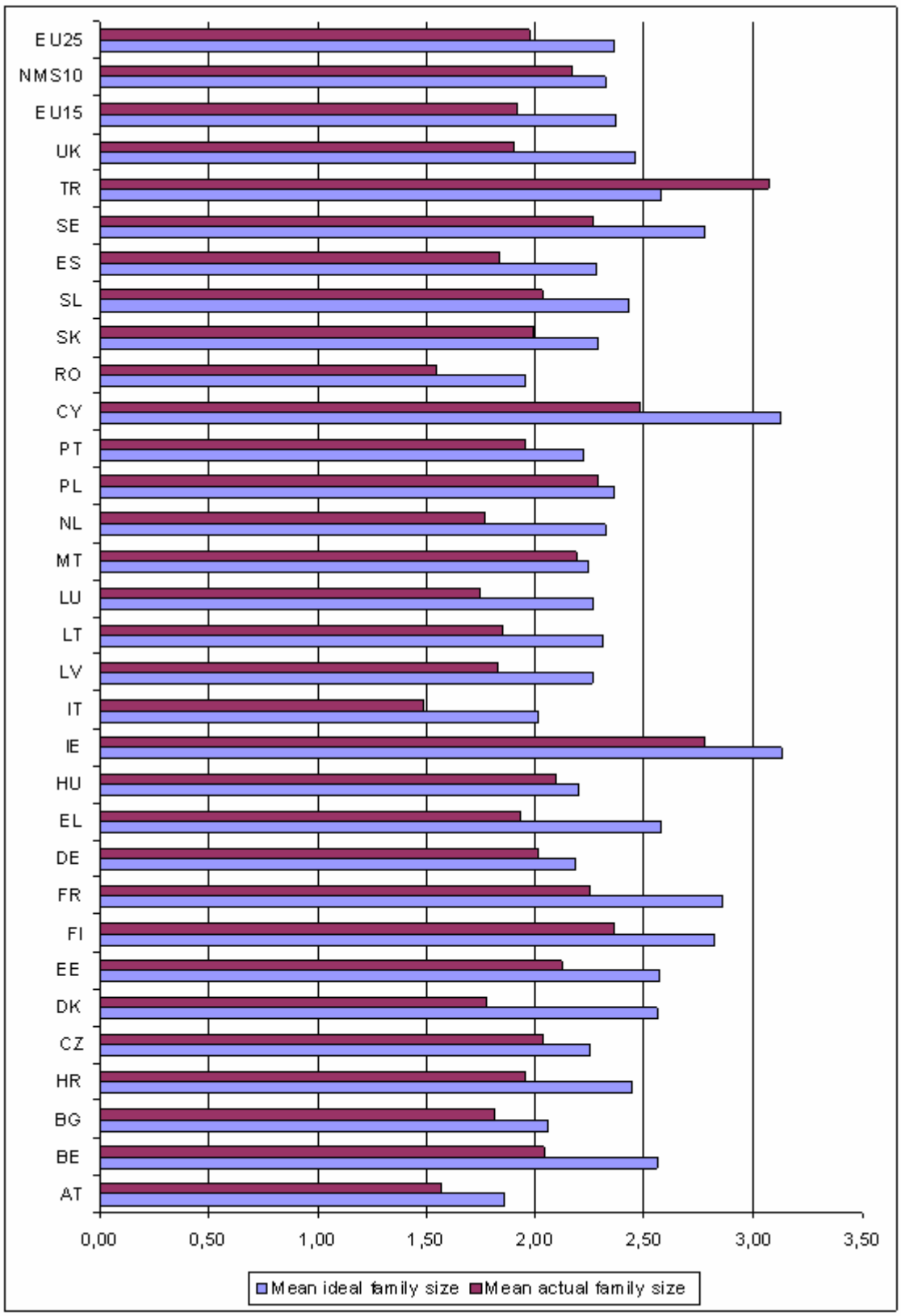
The family as a support network

From whom do you get support in the following situations?	If you needed help around the house when ill			If you needed advice about a serious personal or family member			If you were feeling a bit depressed and wanting someone to talk to			If you needed to urgently raise an important sum of money to face an emergency		
	No partner	Partner	Total	No partner	Partner	Total	No partner	Partner	Total	No partner	Partner	Total
Your partner	6%	70%	45%	6%	60%	38%	8%	57%	37%	3%	22%	14%
Family member	69%	25%	43%	58%	28%	40%	41%	21%	29%	64%	49%	55%
Work colleague	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Friend	11%	1%	5%	25%	7%	7%	37%	15%	24%	9%	4%	6%
Neighbour	4%	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	3%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Someone else	4%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	7%	10%	9%
Nobody	4%	1%	2%	3%	1%	1%	5%	3%	3%	12%	9%	10%
NA	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	4%	4%	4%

Source: Eurobarometer 273 "European social reality" reconducted in November December 2006 in EU-27.

Note: As regards the variable on the family situation in the columns, a respondent has a partner if he or she is married, remarried or unmarried but currently living with a partner.

Mean actual and ideal number of children, by country. Women aged 40 to 54



Source:"Childbearing preferences and family size issues in Europe" by M.R. Testa, results of the 2006 Euro Barometer on fertility and ageing.

Frequency of care by sex, age and country groups (%)

	Q37a: How often: caring for and educating children			Q37c: How often: caring for elderly/disabled people		
	Every day	Once or several times a month	Less often/never	Every day	Once or several times a month	Less often/never
EU15						
Women aged 18–34	42	4	53	4	9	88
Women aged 35–64	49	10	40	10	16	75
Women aged 65+	6	10	84	5	6	88
Men aged 18–34	17	7	77	2	8	90
Men aged 35–64	32	14	54	5	11	84
Men aged 65+	5	7	88	6	5	89
NMS-10						
Women aged 18–34	52	5	44	6	14	80
Women aged 35–64	48	17	35	12	16	72
Women aged 65+	9	16	75	6	5	89
Men aged 18–34	28	9	62	3	14	83
Men aged 35–64	35	20	45	6	16	79
Men aged 65+	9	13	78	6	5	90

Q37a, b, c: How often are you involved in any of the following activities outside your paid work: a) Caring for and educating Children; c) Caring for elderly/disabled relatives?
Note: the modalities 'less often' and 'never' are aggregated together.
Source: EQLS, 2003; row percentages.

Difference of employment rate for women with and without children*

	2005
EU25	14.2
EU15	13.2
EU10	19.5
BE	2.1
CZ	39.2
DK	3.4
DE	26.5
EE	30.0
EL	3.5
ES	7.5
FR	10.2
IE	18.2
IT	6.8
CY	3.4
LV	18.0
LT	2.8
LU	7.0
HU	35.3
MT	17.2
NL	9.4
AT	14.4
PL	11.1
PT	-3.8
SI	-1.5
SK	34.5
FI	17.5
UK	21.2

* Difference in employment rates for women with children under 6 and women without children (age group 20-50).
Source: EU Labour Force Survey – Spring data, LU 2003, 2004 and 2005: Annual average data. Data not available for SE.

Provision of childcare in European countries in 2005

Children cared for (by formal arrangements other than by the family) up to 30 hours / 30 hours or more per usual week as a proportion of all children of same age group

Country		0 – 2 years		3 years – mandatory school age		Mandatory school age – 12 years		Admission age to mandatory school *(pre-primary included)*
		1 – 29h.	*30h. or +*	*1 – 29h.*	*30h. or +*	*1 – 29h.*	*30h. or +*	
EU Member States								
Belgium	BE	23%	19%	49%	48%	43%	54%	6
Bulgaria	BG	.	.	.	.	.	.	7
Czech Republic	CZ	2%	0%	30%	40%	53%	45%	6
Denmark	DK	13%	60%	15%	79%	34%	65%	7
Germany	DE	8%	8%	61%	26%	69%	29%	6
Estonia	EE	3%	9%	9%	69%	57%	40%	7
Ireland	IE	14%	6%	64%	14%	64%	35%	6
Greece	EL	3%	4%	27%	34%	54%	45%	6
Spain	ES	25%	14%	54%	40%	53%	46%	6
France	FR	16%	16%	56%	39%	48%	52%	6
Italy	IT	9%	16%	21%	70%	13%	87%	6
Cyprus	CY	7%	12%	42%	43%	54%	46%	6
Latvia	LV	2%	16%	6%	60%	27%	69%	5
Lithuania	LT	2%	9%	11%	46%	66%	31%	7
Luxembourg	LU	14%	8%	51%	12%	74%	23%	4
Hungary	HU	2%	5%	30%	49%	30%	70%	5
Malta	MT	5%	0%	32%	23%	19%	79%	5
Netherlands	NL	36%	4%	82%	7%	89%	11%	5
Austria	AT	4%	0%	53%	16%	66%	32%	6
Poland	PL	0%	2%	8%	22%	58%	38%	6
Portugal	PT	3%	26%	9%	55%	30%	69%	6
Romania	RO	.	.	.	.	.	.	7
Slovenia	SI	2%	22%	10%	67%	41%	55%	6
Slovakia	SK	0%	3%	10%	57%	39%	44%	6
Finland	FI	8%	19%	25%	51%	82%	18%	7
Sweden	SE	22%	31%	35%	52%	1%	95%	7
United Kingdom	UK	24%	6%	72%	28%	10%	90%	5
EFTA countries								
Iceland	IS	7%	30%	21%	76%	22%	77%	6
Norway	NO	11%	22%	28%	52%	83%	17%	6

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC 2005 data.

Notes:

1) Formal arrangements refer to the EU-SILC survey reply categories 1-4 (pre-school or equivalent, compulsory education, centre-based services outside school hours, a collective crèche or another day-care centre, including family day-care organised/controlled by a public or private structure).

2) Only care for more than 1 hour a week is considered.

3) Some children do not use child care since parent is taking parental leave for a younger child.

4) Child age is calculated at the interview date, except for IE and FI where age is calculated at 31/12/2004.

5) Some countries, like BE, did not collect data for children being 12 years at the interview date.

6) CY, LV, PT, SK: No information collected for children born between 31/12/2004 and the interview date.

7) FR: Care performed by 'assistantes maternelles' directly paid by the parents, without organised structure between them, is not included in the table.

8) IE: For the age groups '0 - 2 years' and '3 years - mandatory school age', the care '1-29h.' is overestimated and the care '30h. or +' underestimated due to measurement error.

9) SK: Measurement error for the age group 'mandatory school age school - 12 years' leading to high proportion of children without school hours.

Social protection benefits targeted at family support in the EU

	2004					
	Share population between 0-19	**Support intensity corrected for the share of the young ***	**Total Fertility Rate**	**Total family support**	**Support in cash**	**Support in kind**
EU-25	22.54%	9.32	1.51	2.1 e	1.5 e	0.6 e
EU-15	22.20%	9.46	:	2.1 e	1.5 e	0.6 e
BE	23.17%	8.63	1.68	2	1.6	0.4
CZ	21.73%	7.36	1.23	1.6 p	1.4 p	0.2 p
DK	24.32%	16.04	1.78	3.9	1.6	2.3
DE	20.48%	14.65	1.37	3 p	2.2 p	0.7 p
EE	23.92%	7.11	1.47	1.7	1.6	0.1
IE	28.38%	8.81	1.99	2.5	2.3	0.3
EL	20.21%	8.41	1.31	1.7	1.2	0.5
ES	20.11%	3.48	1.33	0.7 p	0.4 p	0.3 p
FR	25.06%	9.98	1.92	2.5 p	2 p	0.5 p
IT	19.19%	5.73	1.33	1.1 p	0.7 p	0.5 p
CY	27.75%	7.21	1.49	2	1.9	0.1
LV	23.42%	5.55	1.24	1.3 p	1 p	0.2 p
LT	25.71%	4.28	1.26	1.1 p	0.7 p	0.4 p
LU	24.49%	15.52	1.70	3.8 p	3.3 p	0.6 p
HU	22.20%	11.26	1.28	2.5	1.9	0.6
MT	25.33%	3.95	1.37	1	0.9	0.1
NL	24.53%	5.30	1.73	1.3 p	0.7 p	0.5 p
AT	22.24%	13.49	1.42	3	2.5	0.5
PL	25.36%	3.55	1.23	0.9 p	0.9 p	:
PT	21.62%	5.55	1.40	1.2 p	0.8 p	0.5 p
SI	21.05%	9.50	1.25	2 p	1.4 p	0.6 p
SK	25.50%	7.06	1.24	1.8 p	1.6 p	0.1 p
FI	23.75%	12.63	1.80	3	1.6	1.3
SE	23.98%	12.51	1.75	3 p	1.6 p	1.5 p
UK	24.75%	6.87	1.77	1.7 e	1.3 e	0.4 e

Source: Eurostat, ESSPROS.

* The support in % of GDP divided by the share of young (0-19) in the population.

** e means estimated value, p means provisional value and : means no data available.

Preferences for family support measures

Country	1st place	%	2nd place	%	3rd place	%
AT	More and better working part-time opportunities	90.5	Lower wage and income taxes	88.8	Flexible working hours	88.3
BE	More and better working part-time opportunities	85.2	Flexible working hours	80.5	Lower wage and income taxes	80.2
CZ	An allowance at the birth of child	90.5	Lower wage and income taxes	87.8	Improved parental leave arrangements	86.8
EE	A substantial decrease in the costs of education	96.0	A substantial rise in child allowance	94.5	Improved parental leave arrangements	91.0
FI	Flexible working hours	82.6	Lower wage and income taxes	79.5	Financial support for parents taking care of their children	79.3
DE	More and better working part-time opportunities	89.9	Flexible working hours	89.3	Better day-care facilities for children under 3 years old	88.5
HU	Better housing for families	94.9	A substantial decrease in the costs of education	93.7	A substantial rise in child allowance	92.3
IT	More and better working part-time opportunities	89.2	A substantial rise in child allowance	89.2	Lower wage and income taxes	88.9
LT	An allowance at the birth of child	95.9	Financial support for parents taking care of their children	95.7	Improved parental leave arrangements	94.7
NL	More and better working part-time opportunities	78.9	Flexible working hours	72.0	Improved parental leave arrangements	71.2
PL	Child allowance dependent on family income	92.5	An allowance at the birth of child	92.2	Improved parental leave arrangements	91.1
RO	Lower wage and income taxes	98.2	Improved parental leave arrangements	97.9	Better housing for families	97.4
SI	Better housing for families	97.8	Better day-care facilities for children under 3 years old	97.8	Improved parental leave arrangements	97.3
CY	Lower wage and income taxes	95.9	Improved parental leave arrangements	93.7	Flexible working hours	91.5

Respondents up to 50 years old ("very in favour" and "somewhat in favour").
The Demographic Future of Europe – Facts, Figures, Policies: Results of the Population Policy Acceptance Study (PPAS)- Survey with interviews of 34 000 Europeans in 14 countries from 1999 to 2003 – Federal Institute for population research and Robert Bosch Foundation 2006.

At-risk-of-poverty rates by household type, 2005

	Single parent with dependent children	Two adults with one dependent child	Two adults with two dependent children	Two adults with three or more dependent children	Three or more adults with dependent children
EU25	33s	12s	14s	26s	14s
EU15	32s	11s	13s	25s	14s
NMS10	38s	15s	19s	36s	17s
BE	36	9	10	21	17
BG	:	:	:	:	:
CZ	41	9	11	25	9
DK	21	4	5	14	5
DE	30	10	7	13	7
EE	40	13	12	25	13
IE	45	12	13	26	11
GR	43	14	18	33	28
ES	37	14	23	36	18
FR	26	8	9	20	15
IT	35	15	22	35	21
CY	35	9	9	14	8
LV	31	14	18	39	13
LT	48	15	18	44	14
LU	32	13	17	20	14
HU	27p	15p	15p	26p	11p
MT	51	13	15	35	10
NL	26	9	10	20	6
AT	27	9	11	20	9
PL	40	17	23	45	23
PT	34	17	25	39	15
RO	27	11	16	44	23
SI	22p	9p	10p	17p	6p
SK	32	13	17	24	13
FI	20	7	5	12	8
SE	18	4	4	9	12
UK	38p	11p	13p	29p	13p
IS	14	8	8	10	5
NO	19	4	5	10	4

Source: Eurostat SILC(2005) Income data 2004; except for UK, income year 2005 and for IE moving income reference period (2004-2005); RO National HBS 2005, income data 2005.
Notes: Risk-of-poverty defined as income below 60% of the median income.
: = Not available.
p = Provisional value.
s = Eurostat estimation.