

## WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

**Approximately 80% of care across the EU is provided by spouses, relatives and friends.**

Various demographic and socio-economic developments – societal ageing, austerity budgets, lower birth rates, smaller families, greater physical distances between relatives, rising number of women entering the labour market and a prolonged working life – are increasing both the need for informal care and the pressure on carers.

Without the – usually unpaid – work of these carers, formal care systems would be unsustainable; and many serious health and social care needs would be neglected. Carers are an inherent as well as an indispensable part of the provision, organisation and sustainability of health and care systems.

Despite the obvious importance of carers – both to care provision as well as to the economy and society as a whole – their interests are rarely considered in policies that impact on them, such as around health, social, employment and social security issues.

**Carers receive little recognition for the valuable work they do.**

## WHY JOIN EUROCARERS?

**You can participate in influencing decision-making on behalf of carers:**

- by advocating their needs, formulating evidence-based input in policy development and participating in research projects.

**You have access to Information and capacity building:**

- Through Eurocarers network members exchange information and experience and engage in initiatives of mutual interest;
- Eurocarers provides timely information on relevant developments through its Newsletter, e-mail service and website
- Eurocarers provides opportunities for networking across boundaries

**You can help to strengthen the voice of European carers at national and European levels:**

- Carers and their issues are rising up the European policy agenda, due to continuous representation, actively supported by the European Parliament and the Parliament Interest Group of MEPs on carers. While progress has been made, recognition of carers issues needs to be both increased and consolidated and your organisation is needed to amplify the voice of carers!



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[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCck5P\\_hlWNcn40xV5N9zPCA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCck5P_hlWNcn40xV5N9zPCA)



Eurocarers is the European network representing informal carers and their organisations, with the aim to advance their interests, irrespective of the particular age or health need of the person they are caring for.

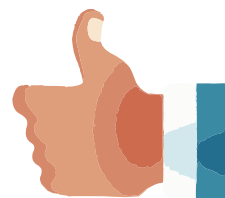
## WHAT IS A CARER?

Carers are persons who provide care (usually unpaid) to someone with a chronic illness, disability or other long lasting health or care need, outside a professional or formal employment framework.

## WHAT ARE OUR AIMS?

Eurocarers aims to:

- Raise awareness of the significant contribution made by carers to health and social care systems and the economy as a whole and the need to safeguard this contribution;
- To ensure that EU and national policies take account of carers; i.e. promote social inclusion of carers; promote the development of support services for carers and enabling carers to remain active in paid employment.



Our document  
ENABLING CARERS TO CARE  
provides more detailed  
information and data :  
<http://tinyurl.com/o78jjt4>

## WHAT ARE OUR ACTIVITIES?

Eurocarers was established to advance the issue of informal care at both national and EU levels by:

- Carrying out and supporting research on issues that concern carers in order to help build the evidence for sound advocacy, communication and – ultimately – policy development
- Advocating the interests of carers with a focus on their health, pensions and social security, social inclusion and employment. As part of this activity, Eurocarers holds the secretariat for the European Parliament's Interest Group on Carers
- Encouraging and facilitating the development of representative and sustainable carers' organisations in all EU states
- Promoting the development of inclusive and patient-centred care systems, which fully recognise the role, contribution and added value of carers

## WHO ARE OUR MEMBERS?

Eurocarers, the European Association Working for Carers, brings together carers' organisations as well as relevant research & development organisations – a combination that enables evidence-based advocacy. These organisations are active at EU, national and regional levels. For a membership overview: <http://www.eurocarers.org/membership>



Eurocarers receives support from the European Union through its programme for Employment and Social Innovation (Easi Programme 2014-2017).

## EUROCARERS' 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### 1 – Recognition

Carers should be recognised for the central role they play in community care, and this recognition should be reflected in all policies having effect on carers.

### 2 – Social inclusion

Carers have a right to a social life.

### 3 – Equality of opportunity

Carers should have equal opportunities in all spheres of life.

### 4 – Choice

People should have the right to choose freely whether they want to be a carer, and to what extent they want to be involved in caring; people needing care should have the right to choose who they wish to be their carers.

### 5 – Information

Carers should have easy access to information, guidance, advocacy, advice and training – fitting to the stage of their carer's career.

### 6 – Support

Carers need financial and emotional support in their role as carers as well as access to needed formal care that is available and affordable.

### 7 – Time off

Carers should have the opportunity of taking time off. Therefore, adequate relief i.e. respite care arrangements, acceptable both to the carer and the cared for person, must be readily available and tailored to carers' needs.

### 8 – Compatibility of care and employment

Carers should have the possibility to combine caring with paid employment. This presupposes labour market policies that allow for caring activities as well as formal care available during working hours.

### 9 – Health promotion and projection

Carers' own health care needs should be recognised.

### 10 – Financial security

Carers should be covered by social security schemes such as income replacement benefits, accident insurance and old age pensions, in order to avoid impoverishment as a consequence of caring.