



Informal carers: invaluable but under pressure

Why do informal carers matter?

- **80% of care** across the EU is provided by informally spouses, relatives and friends – **usually unpaid**.
 - These carers will become even more important as the number of older people is **increasing**.
 - The **economic value** of unpaid informal care - as a percentage of the overall cost of formal long-term care provision - ranges from **50 % to 90 %** across the EU.
 - Caring can be a source of personal **satisfaction** and emotional gratification....
 - ...but it can also have **challenging health, financial, social and employment** consequences.
 - The increasing labour market participation of the main carers, i.e. women and older workers and other demographic developments are leading to **decreasing availability of carers**.
 - Carers cannot do their work without proper **recognition and support (in policy and practice)**.
- **All Member States face the same challenges in terms of long-term care provision**
- **All Member States need the informal care resource to prevent social security systems collapsing**

Despite their relevance, carers are rarely considered in policies that impact on them

What can **YOU** as a member of the European Parliament do?

The Parliament can urge the Commission to make use of the various possibilities to address and support carers, such as:

- ***Including carers issues in social policy development***, i.e. to actively target carers in initiatives like the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, the Employment Package and the Social Investment Package, the PROGRESS programme, the European Social Fund, the Health programme, gender equality initiatives, the social OMC etc..

- **Formulating a specific EU action programme** to ensure and coordinate an effective exchange of information, experience and good practice between relevant stakeholders.
- **Activating EU funding** to contribute to capacity building of carers in relation to provision of support and advocacy as well as support exchange of information, research and networking.
- **Promoting data collection and monitoring** to support sound policy development (e.g. Horizon2020).
- **Adopting legislative measures** to explore the possibility of binding measures, while respecting national competence and the principle of solidarity (e.g. a Directive on carers leave).

Carers are the largest contributors to sustainable health and social security systems

If carers are expected to keep providing care – and they are – their needs and requirements should be an inherent part of health and social policy development. Their contribution needs to be properly considered as part of the economic equation.

The Interest Group on Carers works to ensure the development of **a comprehensive EU strategy on carers**, and your support is urgently needed:

Join the European Parliament Interest Group on Carers and enable carers across the EU to care!