The European Parliament Champions for Informal Carers Platform:
Information for MEPs

What is the EP 'Champions for Informal Carers' Platform?

The EP Champions for Informal Carers Platform brings together MEPs who collectively endorse the notion that unpaid informal care should be valued, recognised and supported as central to the sustainability of health and long-term care systems across the EU. It acts as an internal advocacy group within the European Parliament.

Why is the EP 'Champion for Carers' Platform important?

In the EU, at least 52 million people (14.4% of the population aged 18 to 74) provide - mostly unpaid - informal long-term care to family members or friends on a weekly basis. When using full-time equivalents, informal carers account for 80% of care providers in the region[1]. They represent an indispensable resource, not only to their loved ones, but also to their community, our society and our economy. Without informal care, health and care systems across the EU would simply collapse, as research indicates its estimated value far surpasses the average budget devoted by Member States to professional long-term care[2].

However, without sufficient support, carers may encounter a myriad of challenges in their personal and professional lives. Being a carer can contribute to adverse health effects, hinder educational and employment opportunities and lead to discrimination, social exclusion and poverty.

It is clear that specific policy and concrete support measures are required to empower carers to make informed decisions regarding their involvement in caregiving and the extent of their commitment.

The 'Champions for Informal Carers' Platform will take concrete action to ensure that this will be advocated.

What will the 'Champions for Informal Carers' Platform do?

In order to improve the day-to-day situation for Europe's many carers, working in close partnership with relevant stakeholders, the Platform will

- critically monitor and analyse EU policy development for its impact on carers
- propose and advocate concrete (policy) action to ensure that carers are taken into account in EU policy development;

More specifically, it will

- Work towards an EP Own-Initiative report on carers
- Amend EP reports to ensure that the issues of carers are being recognised and addressed;
- Prepare Written Questions about the carer-relevance/carer-friendliness of EU policy initiatives;
- Publish articles on social media, MEPs' websites, in the Brussels-based media (e.g. Parliament Magazine);
- Develop Calls to Action on specific carer-relevant topics;
- Issue press-releases about the activities (and successes) of the Platform;
- Hold an annual meeting as part of European Carers Day (6 October), combined with a Champions for Informal Carers info stand in the EU Parliament

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[1] Van der Ende, M. et al., 2021, Study on exploring the incidence and costs of informal long-term care in the EU
[2] The economic value of the time dedicated to informal care is estimated to range between 2.4% and 2.7% of the EU 27 GDP, exceeding the average expenditure of most Member States on formal long-term care, which is 1.7% of their GDP.
Study on exploring the incidence and costs of informal long-term care in the EU, EC, 2021

How will it be run in practice?

A team of co-chairs will be elected, preferably representing the main political groups. The coordination and practical actions (monitoring, proposing Written Questions, articles, position statements etc) will be proposed and executed by Eurocarers[3], the European organisation working for carers, to facilitate the participation of MEPs.

Join us!

The Champions for Informal Carers Platform will offer you a concrete opportunity to engage with practical, effective and visible actions benefiting informal carers.

If you are interested in joining us, or require more information, please click HERE.

Thank you for your interest!

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[3] www.eurocarers.org