

EQUAL AT HOME - EQUAL AT WORK

How to effectively support parents in balancing family and work life?

Conference moderators

Attila Böhm, Senior Policy and Advocacy officer, COFACE

Sylwia Ziemacka, Board Member of the Share the Care Foundation

8:30–9:00 | Registrations and coffee

9:00–9:30 | Welcome

Magdalena Sobkowiak-Czarnecka, Undersecretary of State, European Union Affairs Division, The Chancellery of the Prime Minister

Karolina Andrian, Board Member, Share the Care Foundation

Antonia Torrens, President, COFACE Families Europe

Mariusz Jedynak, Board Member, ZUS

9:30–10:00 | Opening Speech: "Why We Should Care? The Future of Family Supportive Workplaces"

Speaker: Jasmin Thomas, Economist, Organisation for economic cooperation and development

An ageing workforce, declining birth rates, and increasing caregiving responsibilities are reshaping our societies. This keynote will explore the links between gender equality measures and family-supportive workplace policies, as a benefit not just for employees and employers, but society at large.

10:00–10:30 | Presentation: Values and Policies – What the EU Agenda Means for Employers, Policymakers, and Families

Speaker: Elizabeth Gosme, Director, COFACE Families Europe

An overview of key European policies affecting work-life balance and support systems, including insights into the EU Work-Life Balance Directive and other legislative frameworks that can help create family-friendly workplaces. Focus on impact of those directives on workplace but also employees/society.

10:30–11:30 | Panel discussion. Building Family-Supportive Workplaces: Translating Goals and Values into Action and Benefits to all

Speakers:

Samantha Howe, Policy Assistant, European Public Service Unions,

Kinga Jóó, Member, European Economic and Social Committee

Jon Rogstad, Research Professor, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

Elisabeth Wenzl, Director, Familie & Beruf Management GmbH, Austria

Magdalena Jarzynska, HR lead, Mattel

This panel will discuss the importance of cross-sector collaboration in fostering truly inclusive, family-supportive workplaces. Speakers will discuss the impact of recent regulations, examining both progress and areas for improvement. A key focus will be on the need to adapt policies to the realities of modern family life and the evolving workplace. This session aims to inspire actionable insights on how employers and policymakers can build workplaces that not only meet regulatory standards but also adapt to the changing dynamics of family and work.

11:30–12:10 | Case Study: "Mums and Dads in Poland – Are the Regulations Effective?"

Speakers:

Aleksandra Gajewska, Secretary of State, Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Mariusz Jedynek, Board Member, ZUS

Karolina Andrian, Board Member, Share the Care

Marcin Stanecki, Chief Labor Inspector, National Labor Inspectorate

An in-depth look at parental benefits and social support in Poland, from maternity and paternity leave to the Active Parents programme and social benefits for parents. This session will provide a comprehensive overview of what works, what doesn't, and where improvements can be made, based on perspectives from parents, employers, policymakers, and service providers.

12:10–13:10 | Networking lunch

13:10–14:00 | Panel Discussion. Beyond Compliance: How Leading Workplaces Pioneer Family-Supportive Practices

Speakers:

Karolina Gębura-Nowak, Director of People and Culture, Member of the Management Board, PMI

Joanna Majda, Employee Development and Engagement Manager, Lidl,
Agnieszka Krawczyk, Poland, Ukraine & CEE Commercial HR BP, Haleon,
Malwina Wąsowska-Domirska, Chapter Lead Feature Engineer III, ING Hubs Poland,
Małgorzata Petru, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, BNP Paribas Bank Poland
Representatives of Credit Agricole, BNP Paribas, Nordea,

A conversation with pioneering employers who are leading the way in Diversity, Inclusion, and Equality (DIE) practices, creating workplaces that support families and attract top talent by fostering inclusive cultures even before regulations mandate it.

14:00–15:10 | Parallel breakout sessions. Key Ingredients for Building Family-Supportive Workplaces

6 parallel discussions, 1 hour each. These breakout sessions will focus on practical approaches to foster family-supportive environments. Each session will be hosted by two organisations leading in a specific area, allowing participants to engage directly with experts, discuss best practices, and brainstorm effective strategies for change.

Session 1: Do we need EU regulations?

Session 2: Centering Families in Social Policy Amid Declining Fertility Rates

Session 3: Attracting Mothers Back to the Workforce: Policies and Perceptions that Drive Success

Session 4: Engaging Men in Parental Equality: Breaking Down Barriers and Building Support

Session 5: Does the Partnership Family Model Support Fertility?

Session 6: Crafting Inclusive Family Campaigns: Engaging Diverse Audiences in the Workplace and Public Sphere

Session 1: Do we need EU regulations?

This session will explore the effectiveness and necessity of key regulations shaping equal opportunities in the workplace, including the European Union's Work-Life Balance Directive, the Directive on Improving the Gender Balance on Corporate Boards, the EU Pay Transparency Directive, and the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). The panel will discuss how these directives contribute to fostering fair and inclusive work environments, focusing on gender diversity, equal pay, and work-life balance integration.

Discussion leaders: Sylwia Ziemacka, Board Member, Share The Care Poland and Annina Lubbock, Social Scientist and Gender Specialist, CSB onlus, Italy

Experts: Ewa Rumińska-Zimny, Vice President Kongres Kobiet; Katarzyna Gawel, Head of DEI Ringier Axel Springer Polska, Robert Lisiecki, Director of the Labour Department at the Lewiatan Confederation.

Session 2: Centering Families in Social Policy Amid Declining Fertility Rates

With fertility rates plummeting, there's a need to reconsider how families are valued in society. This session will explore the evolving roles of mothers, fathers, and children, focusing on policies that benefit families without alienating other social groups. Attendees will discuss how to create family-centred policies that foster inclusive dialogue, reduce skepticism, and address the broader social need for family support. The discussion will emphasize the importance of educating citizens about intergenerational and interpersonal solidarity, explaining why supporting citizens based on their needs is crucial for the well-being of society as a whole. The aim is to explore how policies can be designed to balance the needs of families with those of other groups, ensuring social harmony and avoiding inequalities.

Discussion leaders: Jérôme Gourod, Board member, UNAF France and Andreas Edel, Director, Population Europe

Experts: Iga Magda, PhD, Associate Professor at the Warsaw School of Economics, Vice President, IBS- Institute of Structural Research, Andrzej Kubisiak, Vice President, Polish Economic Institute, Aneta Kielczewska, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, Tomasz Pactwa, Director, Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Session 3: Attracting Mothers Back to the Workforce: Policies and Perceptions that Drive Success

This session will examine the barriers and motivations for mothers re-entering the workforce after childbirth. The discussion will cover regulatory frameworks, workplace culture, social attitudes, disability and care realities, and supportive measures that can make the transition smoother.

Participants will evaluate policies that effectively facilitate mothers' return to work, identifying best practices and areas for improvement.

Discussion Leaders: Lutgard Vrints, Gezinsbond, Belgium and Marie Toulemonde, UNFPA EECA

Experts: Paulina Janiak, Founder&Owner, Femmeritum, Marika Hartwich VP, Central Europe People Business Partner, Mastercard, Aldona Kozłowska, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Orange, Representative of Lidl,

Session 4: Engaging Men in Parental Equality: Breaking Down Barriers and Building Support

This session will explore strategies to foster greater male involvement in parenting, promoting equality in caregiving roles. Participants will discuss approaches to encourage men to embrace shared parental responsibilities and explore how engaged fatherhood benefits families, employers, and society as a whole. The session will also address ways to help women and employers see the advantages of actively supporting male engagement in parenting.

Discussion Leaders: Anna Tarrant, University of Lincoln and Miguel de la Corte, European Equality Law Network

Experts: Karolina Andrian, President, Share The Care Poland, Nikki van der Gaag, Representative of Men Engage Europe, Kamil Janowicz, Ph.D psychologist, post-doctoral researcher at SWPS University, Błażej Kobus, Head of Social Media Team, BNP Paribas Bank Poland

Session 5: Does the Partnership Family Model Support Fertility?

The role of men in the decline of birth rates is often overlooked. In recent years, there has been a growing trend of increasing male involvement in caregiving roles. However, new tools, such as parental leave for fathers, are still underutilized in most EU countries, and the main focus of demographic discussions continues to be on the needs of mothers. Could partnership, and understanding what it means for both women and men, help in shaping solutions that support fertility?

Discussion leaders: Kathleen Emmery, Odisee Centre for Family Studies and Sven Iversen, Association of Germany Family organisations

Experts: Kacper Nosarzewski, Pertner 4CF, phd Anna Kurowska, Associate Professor at the University of Warsaw, phd Agnieszka Chłoń-Domińczak, Vice Rector, Warsaw School of Economics, Rafał Zadykiewicz, Medical University of Warsaw, Member of the Committee on the Ethical Aspects of Human Reproduction and Women's Health (FIGO)

Session 6: Crafting Inclusive Family Campaigns: Engaging Diverse Audiences in the Workplace and Public Sphere

How can workplaces, local authorities, and government bodies design campaigns that promote family values—like motherhood, partnership, and fatherhood—without alienating single parents, child-free individuals, seniors, or LGBTQ+ communities? This session will explore strategies for communicating family support inclusively, crafting messages that resonate across diverse demographics and foster positive reactions.

Discussion leaders: Marina Wetzter-Karlsson, Vaestoliitto Finland and Genny Sangiovanni, NELFA

Experts: Radosław Wierzbński, PhD in Social Sciences, Dadvertising Experet, Head of Comms, Allegro, Renata Szredzińska, President of the Board at Empowering Children Foundation Poland, Representative of the National Labour Inspectorate, Poland (TBC), Anna Bachulska-Kossek, Marketing Manager (OTC), Haleon,

15:10–15:50 | Key takeaways from each sessions

All six groups feed back to the plenary followed by exchanges.

15:50–16:00 | Conclusions and next steps

16:00–17:00 | Networking